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ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN BANGLADESH

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MOHAMMAD MOHABBAT KHAN

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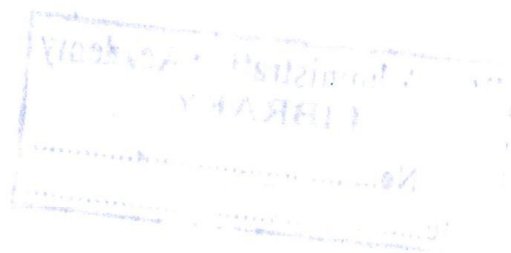
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*In memory of my beloved mother who left us for
heavenly abode many years ago but whose presence
I feel everyday in my life*

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Preface

The present book is a wide-ranging study of the state of major administrative reforms in Bangladesh. Administrative reforms intended to bring about radical changes in the inherited and colonial structure of the civil service and behavioural patterns and ethos of the civil servants have failed to materialise. Lack of political commitment, resistance from within, lack of absence of pro-reform pressure groups and citizens passive tolerance of corruption, mismanagement and irregularities of civil servants at all levels have contributed in different degrees to the sustenance of a civil service system whose utility has long been questioned by scholars, academics and concerned citizens alike.

The book begins with a chapter titled globalisation of administrative reform. This chapter highlights the significance of administrative reform in the global context. The discussion also includes important trends of administrative reforms in the year 2000 and beyond. Second and third chapters critically analyse the outcome of the major recommendations of reform commissions and committees appointed by different governments between 1972 and 2011. The following chapter evaluates the role of donor-appointed reform bodies and response of successive governments. The fifth chapter examines the fate of the major administrative reform proposals in south Asian countries. The final chapter examines the experiences of commonwealth countries in the arena of major administrative reforms. It is believed that such experiences will prepare Bangladesh to face the challenges of the 21st century.

The book was first published in 1998 and received well by the readers. The first edition was sold out a few years ago and there was consistent demand from students, researchers and teachers for a revised and updated edition of the book. The present edition contains latest information as well as a new chapter.

I hope, this edition of the book like the earlier edition, will be useful to the readers.

January 2013

Mohammad Mohabbat Khan

CHAPTER 1

Globalisation of Administrative Reform

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Administrative reform (AR) is a widely used concept. Still disagreement persists among scholars and practitioners as to the meaning, nature, strategies and outcome of AR. In spite of such disagreements governments in all developing regions have long realised that effective public administration systems are essential to the achievement of national development objectives (UN, 1983:1). There is a sustained consciousness among these countries of the continuing urgency of major administrative reforms (UN, 1982: 13). It has also become imperative to differentiate between major administrative reforms and minor improvements in public administration system in a particular country. Major administrative reforms are undertaken usually in response to significant social, political or functional changes while the latter emerge as a continuing process of evolution in response to changing requirements (UN, 1981:15). Increasingly, open recognition is being given to the fact that structural and process reforms are less demanding than normative and attitudinal factors in making public services more effective as agents of change (UN, 1982:13). This chapter (a) presents some definitions of AR and analyses the representative definitions from among them; (b) discusses the continuing importance of AR in the present context of developing countries; (c) probes into the constraints to AR; (d) delineates some of

the key strategies for facilitating AR; and (e) focuses on some of the major recent trends and developments pertaining to AR in the 1990s and beyond.

1.2 DEFINING ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

The wide divergence that exists among scholars regarding the meaning of administrative reform and its consequences was pointed out in late '60s by the foremost theoretician of administrative reform this way:

The study of administrative reform is handicapped by the absence of a universally accepted definition. The indiscriminate use of the term has led to confusion and to difficulties in setting parameters for research and theorising ... The term has been applied, for instance, to all improvements in administration ... to general administrative overhauls in difficult circumstances ... to specific remedies for maladministration ... to any suggestion for better government (Caiden, 1969: 4).

Caiden's observations made almost thirty years ago remain valid even today. One of the first scholars who attempted to understand and define the concept of AR was Caiden. For him it means 'the artificial inducement of administrative transformation against resistance' (Caiden, 1969:65). Administrative Reform, according to Caiden, contains three interrelated properties: moral purpose (which points to the need for improving the status quo), artificial transformation (which leads to a considerable departure from existing arrangements), and administrative resistance (when opposition is assumed) (Caiden, 1969:65). This definition has been interpreted by Anisuzzaman and Khan this way: (1) that AR is subject to human design (artificial) and it involves persuasion, argument and advocacy as opposed to force (inducement), (2) that it leads to or is part of a change (transformation); and which (3) generates some opposition to the change proposed (resistance) (Anisuzzaman and Khan, 1980:29). A practitioner interprets Caiden's definition of AR more or less in similar vein as Anisuzzaman and Khan. For him the definition implies that (1) administrative reform is artificially stimulated by man and is not accidental, automatic or natural; (2) administrative reform is a transformatory process; and (3) resistance is a concomitant of the process of administrative reform (Dey, 1971:560). Quah questions the definition of Caiden on three grounds: (1) it does not indicate the goals of administrative reform; (2) it does not provide an adequate description of the content of administrative reform; and (3) the element

of resistance is not a distinguishing feature of administrative reform (Quah, 1981: 39).

Lee views administrative reform as a complex process in which many factors interact and affect one another and whose results can be found over a considerable period of time (Lee, 1970). He states that AR 'is an effort to apply new ideas and combination of ideas to administrative system with a conscious view to improving the system for positive goals of development' (Lee, 1970:7). He contributes two concepts, i.e. (a) new ideas are necessary and related to improving the system; and (b) whose application is related to the positive goals of national development (Lee, 1976). Lee's definition of AR does two things: (a) it gives AR a national dimension as distinguished from purely organisational or intra-bureaucratic concerns for change; and (2) usefulness of innovation in AR is assumed to be related to the improvement of the administrative system (Anisuzzaman and Khan, 1980:33). Dror defines AR as 'directed change of the main features of an administrative reform, a case of directed administrative system, change must either (a) be at least of medium comprehensiveness plus high innovativeness; or (b) be of high comprehensiveness plus at least medium innovativeness (Dror, 1976). But his definition suffers from a vagueness arising out of his inability or unwillingness to delineate the main features of an administrative system as well as what constitutes an AR (Anisuzzaman and Khan, 1980:35).

Definitions of AR provided by Caiden, Lee and Dror are useful but limitations of their efforts are now widely recognised. Below some definitions of AR are presented which will enable one to better understand and operationalise the concept. Reform is generally identified with 'improvement' or the creation of good administration (Saxena, 1980:18). To Leemans it (reform) has consequently acquired normative taint (Leemans, 1976:13). Thus AR refers to 'changes of broad scope and high intensity in the governmental organisation' (Leemans, 1976). It has been argued that AR will include the reorganisation of the machinery of government as a sub-system of the larger system containing political and bureaucratic elements (Leemans, 1976). He adds that 'success or failure of reform again depends largely on the influence and power structure in the organisation and on the influence and power of persons and groups who support or oppose the reorganisation. It is unlikely that reform action will affect the reorganisation process unless it has the support of people or groups who can exercise a good deal of influence,

(Leemans, 1976). Mukarjee agrees that 'the opportunities of change and its dimensions could conceivably be stretched by winning supporters in centres of influence, both political and administrative' (Mukarjee, 1971). It needs to be pointed out here that it is not accurate to use reform and reorganisation as interchangeable words as Leemans has done. It is probably more accurate to say that administrative reorganisation constitutes one important procedure for implementing administrative reforms (Quah 1981:31). More pertinently, administrative reform can be differentiated from reorganisation this way. The broader term 'administrative reform' usually implies a crusading intent; it has a definite moralistic tone. In content, it may actually involve 'reorganisation' and 'innovation' (Abueva, 1970: 21).

The discussion above sets the tone for analysing below those definitions of AR that are more appropriate for the purpose of this book.

Administrative reform can be defined as the 'deliberate use of authority and influence to apply new measures to an administrative system so as to change its goals, structures and procedures with a view to improving it for developmental purposes' (UN, 1983:1). This definition to a large extent portrays the dynamics of AR. But its lack of emphasis on attitudinal aspects of civil servants considerably weakens its appeal.

Quah defines AR as 'a deliberate attempt to change both (a) the structure and procedure of public bureaucracy (i.e., reorganisation or the institutional aspect) and (b) the attitudes and behaviour of the public bureaucrats involved (i.e., the attitudinal aspect), in order to promote organisational effectiveness and attain national development goals' (Quah, 1981:44). Though this definition quite appropriately includes structures and procedures of public organisations along with attitudes and behaviours of public officials as targets of conscious change but it also links at the same time such change with commitment for national development. This linking of national development with AR and inclusion of reorganisation within AR makes Quah's definition too broad and cumbersome and difficult to accept in totality.

Abueva offers a definition of AR that is useful for our purpose here. He views AR 'essentially as a deliberate attempt to use power, authority and influence to change the goals, structure or procedures of the bureaucracy, and therefore to alter the behaviour of its personnel' (Abueva, 1970:22). He further amplifies the definition by adding that

AR 'aims to change or redirect the characteristic or conventional ways by which people in the government think and act vis-à-vis each other, towards the organisations they may be representing and in relation to individual citizens as well as to various segments of the public' (Abueva, 1970). Abueva's definition is both comprehensive as well as specific.

Khan's definition of AR is very similar to that of Abueva. He defines AR as 'those efforts which call for or lead to major changes in the bureaucratic system of a country intended to transform the existing and established practice, behaviours and structures within it' (Khan, 2009:57). Khan's definition along with those of Abueva, UN and partially Quah's will be utilised to understand, interpret and evaluate major administrative reform initiatives in Bangladesh.

The concept of reform, as we have seen, has several different meanings. Turner and Hulme have opined that these different meanings indicate a number of common elements. These are: deliberate planned change, innovation and improvement, need to cope with uncertainties and rapid change, heavy technical content with an inherent political process, system-wide change or targeting specific institutional issues, means to an end, and involve a combination of strategies and approaches (Turner and Hulme, 1997).

1.3 IMPORTANCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

Redesigning and overhauling the structure and organisation of governmental apparatuses as well as modifying and changing the behavioural patterns of public servants have been, in most cases, the continuing concerns of administrative reformers all over the world. These concerns are premised on three fundamental beliefs about limitations of public organisations. These are: the imperfectability of human institutions, the conservative nature of large public organisations, and the slowness of innovations to permeate public organisations (Caiden, 1985:459). These premises on the one hand point to the crucial and omnipresent role of administrative reform in the field of public administration as well as underscore the importance of appropriate and timely implementation of major administrative reform measures to improve delivery of public services, to enforce greater accountability of public servants to political leaders in power and to increase the accessibility of citizens to public offices. The persistent concern with administrative reforms in general and major administrative reforms

in particular in developing countries can be attributed to: discontinuities between a colonial administrative system and the needs and demands of sovereign governments, another to the need for an administrative apparatus adequate for performing the expanding role of governments in managing the economy, and the third to the desire to change the orientation and attitudes of civil servants and to introduce modern management techniques or processes in order to make the administration more efficient and effective in the delivery of services to the public (UN, 1983: 3).

1.4 CONSTRAINTS TO MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Still many constraints have made initiation and more so implementation of major administrative reforms difficult in the countries of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. These constraints can be summarised as follows i.e.; (a) reform measures have been illconceived and are unclear about their objectives; (b) administrative reform efforts have not been integrated with socio-economic developments; (c) administrative reform efforts have been politically motivated and often geared to partisan or individual rather than overall national interests; (d) resistance towards reforms is generated and sustained by civil servants who perceive their interest to be adversely affected as a result of implementation of proposed reforms; (e) lack of professionalism among civil servants, who handle administrative reform, denied it (administrative reform) the necessary disciplined and systematic approach; (f) lack of adequate and sustained institutional support for administrative reform; (g) persistence phenomenon of administrative dependence, i.e. on colonial administrative system which is not in tune and sometimes in conflict with indigenous institutions, social customs and values; (h) prevalence of excessive formalism resulting in overconcentration and evaluating formal organisational structures, designing new ones and institutionalising the legal basis for their implementation; and (i) insufficient public support for reform (UN, 1982:14; UN, 1979:29-30).

Major limitations of administrative reforms have usually surfaced during the implementation stage. Caiden has catalogued a long list of practical problems which resulted in the failure of major administrative reform proposals and measures. These include: (a) a bad beginning, where the reformers did not have sufficient grasp of the situation to realise that they were unacceptable or their reforms were unworkable or they merely reinforced existing deficiencies by advocating more of

the same; their reforms were stillborn; (b) imitation not innovation, where reforms were exact copies of what had succeeded elsewhere but would fail in this particular situation or would remain unimplemented as ritual affirmation of administrative ethics because people already knew what to do but they did not know how to do it; (c) incorrect diagnosis, where reformers misinterpreted the facts or got sidetracked into inconsequential or they accepted too much without question; (d) hidden intentions, where the reformers had or were suspected of having hidden agendas of their own and no one would cooperate with them as a result; (e) indecisive approach, where the reformers could not agree even among themselves as to the scope, magnitude of change, rate of change and comprehensiveness of their proposals, and failed to convince people that they were serious; (f) faulty planning, where the reformers could not operationalise, where the reformers were overly conservative in their choice of strategies, switched from macro-reforms to technical trivia, and failed to attract creative talent and transform it into a critical mass of congenial reform advocates; (g) inability to command resources; (h) no monitoring, which meant that the reformers did not know to what extent their reforms were being modified or altered; (i) absence of feedback, which meant that the reformers had no idea what was really happening at all; (j) evaluation ignored, which meant that the reformers did not know whether their reforms were actually working or doing the things they were supposed to do; and (k) goal displacement, where the intention of the reformers were subordinated to other objectives, and administrative reform was only a pretext for political, social, cultural and economic change (Caiden, 1976:145-165 quoted in Bjur and Caiden, 1981:114-115).

1.5 STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Devising strategies for facilitating implementation of major administrative reforms is not an easy task given the complex and difficult job of bringing about wide-ranging changes in well-entrenched and tradition-bound civil services in developing countries. The studies commissioned as well as undertaken by the United Nations have put forward a number of strategies to overcome the myriad of problems which characterise the reform process. These strategies are:

- (a) fostering an environment favourable to reform, facilitated by the right political, social and administrative climate, derived from an

awareness of the urgency for administrative reform; (b) appointing a high-level commission with representation of all interests from time to time to undertake a comprehensive review of the public services, to identify the major administrative deficiencies and to advise on the appropriate reform measures to be undertaken; (c) devising of comprehensive plans and programs, flexible and easy to implement, for administrative reform on the advice of the commission proposed above and its acceptance or modifications by the government; (d) integration of all administrative reform measures with national socio-economic plans and making the former consistent with overall development objective; (e) creation of a permanent machinery comprising of a network of implementing organs in the different sectors, departments and levels of government to ensure proper implementation of administrative reform measures; and (f) redirecting personal attitudes, motivations and professional values of the civil servants to make them more change-oriented (UN, 1982: 14-15; UN, 1979: 30-31).

Wilenski highlights some very important basic rules to facilitate implementation of administrative reforms. These rules combine in them elements of both reform objectives and a reform strategy. They are:

- identify and publicise the failure of public bureaucracies so as to reinforce existing dissatisfaction;
- recognise that there will be resistance to reform so that strategy must build alliance with key individuals or groups and if possible pit one part of the bureaucracy against another;
- devote greater attention to implementation and place lesser emphasis on formulating a policy reform, ideally the two processes should be integrated;
- identify or choose effective levels of change like enactment of new legislation, creating a new institution that will bring about change in administrative behaviour; and
- other levers of change could include bringing in new people, changing formal processes and formal organisation structures (Wilenski, 1986: 257-276).

Caiden, after analysing the existing literature and experiences of many countries specially those in the developing areas, presents a number of variables and conditions which paved the way for successful implementation of major administrative reforms.

First, reforms were political in character and intended to strengthen direct governmental control over public service by changing the power and influence of the latter. Second, the government was determined to impose radical reform measures in the face of resistance by civil servants provided by such measures had the support of the technical experts and people-at-large. Third, civil servants were involved at every stage of the reform cycle, i.e., from planning to implementation, to ensure their support in the reform exercise. Fourth, reform goals were set in such a manner so that these could be achievable as well as measurable with the intention of learning quickly of the outcome and adopting necessary corrective measures. Fifth, reform concentrated on utilising existing arrangements and selected instruments to show confidence in civil servants. Sixth, reform leaders had a deep personal interest in the fate of the reforms. Seventh, the reformers were always aware of the inherent limitations of their efforts (Caiden, 1988:353).

1.6 MAJOR TRENDS IN ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM IN THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND

Civil services in many developing countries are even today too large, too expensive and insufficiently productive; and civil servants, especially those in the managerial positions are poorly motivated (Nunberg and Nellis, 1990: 2). This is a sad commentary on the state of administrative reform after four decades of continuous experimentation with new ideas, quick-fix methods and fail-proof strategies. Several international donors/bodies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat have spent lot of resources on experts to come up with solutions of multifarious ills afflicting the civil service systems all over the world. Their agendas include liberalisation, deregulation, downsizing the public sector, shrinking bloated public organisations, privatisation, debureaucratisation, civil service reform, budget reform, performance measures, businesslike management, long-term transparency, efficiency and accountability (Caiden, 1991).

The above-mentioned agendas had striking similarities with the important approaches tried out in Anglo-American democracies in the 1980s to reform the civil service ... the assumption of public sector inefficiency, the recourse to private sector expertise, the stubborn belief in the usefulness of merit pay and the tremendous emphasis on new accounting procedures (Pollitt, 1985: 45). The decade of the '90s has already seen emergence of a number of approaches that attempt to bring

about improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness and performance in the public sector. These approaches have been hailed by many as provider of appropriate remedies to a discredited public sector. At the same time, some have questioned the validity of these approaches in the context of public sector which, according to them, is significantly different from the private sector. The discussion below attempts to describe the major tenets of three new approaches: citizen's charter, re-engineering and reinventing government. It needs to be stated that there are some important differences among three approaches in terms of emphasis on principles and ideas.

1.7 CUSTOMER EMPOWERMENT

Customer empowerment is an idea that dominates thinking in the arena of administrative reform. Customer empowerment is quite familiar in developed countries.

Now what are some of advantages of treating the ordinary citizens as empowered customers?

First, the empowered citizens as customers are usually well informed. Second, they can more judiciously exercise their choices. Third, they become more effective to manage different forces operating in the market place. Fourth, it also implies an established administrative capacity to counter all the potential negative shortcomings of the concept as a management tool (Ayeni, 2001:3).

Empowerment of customers presents public administration with a number of critical challenges. Some of these are: First, is whether the fundamental objective of market-based strategies work effectively in the public sector environment. Second, while there is the pressing need to introduce and sustain more business-like management ideas but at the same time keeping in mind the interest of the less disadvantaged segments of the society. Third, citizen empowerment needs to be effectively integrated with other change efforts that are taking place in the country. Fourth, citizens in the public sector should be as empowered as their private sector counterpart. This means that quality, regularity and timeliness of service delivery in the public sector should be as important as it is in the private sector. Fifth, it is critical that there should be guarantee for value for money (VFM) for those who demand and pay for service. Sixth, it is also important to ensure that private sector providers are made accountable to their customers (Ayeni, 2001: 3)

1.8 CITIZEN'S CHARTER

As of now the significant developments have taken place in the British civil service with the launching of the Citizen's Charter in July 1991. The Charter aimed at 'raising the standard of public services by making them more responsive to the wishes and needs of the users' (The Citizen's Charter, 1991:5). The end product expected to include high quality services provided efficiently and at a reasonable cost. The Citizens' outlines six important principles which are designed to emphasise the idea of citizen as a customer of public services and transform it (the idea) into a reality in every day management and operation of those services.

First, explicit and measurable standards for civil service are established and monitored. These standards must be known to the citizens so that they know what services are expected and as to whether standards have been met or not while providing stipulated services. So publication of actual performance against set standards is also required. Second, it is crucial that complete and accurate information, is readily available and easily accessible about how civil service is run, what it costs, how well it performs and who is in-charge and at what point. Information and openness are needed, among other things, to build rapport and trust between civil servants and members of the public. Third, within the broad ambit of the public sector citizens should be provided with maximum opportunity to choose, among competing services. It is widely believed that choice is possibly the best stimulant to improve quality. Regular and systematic consultation must take place between civil servants and users of services. This is because user's views about services and their suggestions for improving them are critically important for taking final decisions on standards.

Fourth, the basic premise behind courtesy and helpfulness is that public services should be provided equally and without discrimination or bias to all who are entitled and run it in the manner to suit their convenience.

Fifth, civil servants must always be aware as what to do when things go wrong. The actions to be taken in such situations include offering an unconditional and public apology, a full explanation as to where and how things went out of track and initiating swift and effective measures to remedy the mistakes committed. But things cannot be put right unless compliant procedures are well-publicised, in place and easy to deal with. Independent reviews of procedures

should be undertaken from time to time to bring them in tune with needs of the users.

Sixth, taxpayer is the king is the philosophy behind the value for money (VFM) principle. He should be ensured efficient and economical delivery of services within the resource constraint of the state. One of the prerequisites of VFM is that an independent validation of performance against standards must be undertaken on a continuous basis. It is imperative from the above discussion that all the principles are interrelated. Standards of performance are critical for choice and consultation, putting things right and value for money. But running through all these principles are the themes of accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and transparency. In essence, the charter is an agenda about:

- outcomes and outputs, rather than inputs, and the needs of users and not the interests of producers;
- government sticking to essentials and doing those well; using markets wherever possible to improve choice and, through the spur of competition, to achieve better value for money; addressing the particular task, designing the shape of the organisation which best meets it, and delegating responsibility for delivery to that organisation;
- raising the performance of individual public servants through effective recruitment, training, appraisal and incentives (Mottram, 1994:3).

Many developing countries reform efforts also indicate a clear shift away from traditional concerns mostly with rules and regulations to increasing emphasis on quality culture, performance targets, contracting out of services, customer orientation, accountability and transparency.

1.9 RE-ENGINEERING

Re-engineering as a term was coined by Hammer in 1990 (Hammer, 1990). Re-engineering having its origins in big business in USA is considered to be equally applicable to public organisations. 'Re-engineering is the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service, and speed' (Hammer and Champy, 1993:32). Re-engineering, according to Kruger (1993: 31) as quoted in Halachmi (1995: 329-330), is considered a comprehensive and

effective way for organisations to reduce cycle times, surpass customer expectations, enhance productivity, increase sales and reap higher profits. But re-engineering as a concept is yet to be defined precisely to the satisfaction of all. The attempt is on to define and redefine the concept on the basis of results obtained from its applications in various kinds of organisations in different settings. Halachmi (1995:331) has found it more worthwhile to discern the salient attributes of the concept rather than attempt to define it in precise detail. According to him such attributes can be found in the writing of some prominent authors in the area of re-engineering (Hammer and Champy, 1993; Davenport, 1993; Davenport and Short, 1990).

The main attributes of re-engineering are the following (Halachmi, 1995:331). First, the concentration is on developing around processes and outcomes. The preference is to see an individual perform all tasks in the process whenever feasible. Second, the central focus is on the customer or client within a results-oriented and team-based approach. This requires rigorous measurement of performance and close analysis of change and the rate of change for assessing performance. But that is possible with total commitment of all employees and a substantive involvement of top management at all times. Third, systematic searches be undertaken to bring about radical changes for the purpose of improvements and breakthroughs when an incremental approach will not succeed.

1.10 REINVENTING GOVERNMENT

Reinventing government has become a very powerful and catchy phrase during last two decades. The term was popularised by the publication of an influential book by Osborne and Gaebler titled *Reinventing Government* (1992). The book contains a number of rationales for the reinvention movement. These are: to empower citizens, to promote mission-driven entrepreneurial leadership in order to 'steer rather than row', to enhance competition and deregulate government by cutting red tape, to foster 'total quality management', to decentralise government, and argument for performance budgeting, support for civil service reform and advocacy for privatisation (Nathan, 1995:213).

The reinventing government idea has been accepted with great enthusiasm by Clinton Administration in USA. President Clinton formed a National Performance Review (NPR) team under the leadership of Vice President Al Gore. The government report titled 'From Red Tape

to Results: Creating a Government that Works Better Costs Less' published in 1994 contained 384 specific recommendations and predicted a saving of \$ 108 billion for US government over five years if these recommendations were implemented. Gore's exercise sometimes dubbed as 'reinventing the federal government' intended to invent a government that puts people first by (a) serving its customers, (b) empowering its employees, and (c) fostering excellence (Moe, 1994:111). All these would be done by (a) creating a clear sense of mission, (b) delegating authority and responsibility, (c) replacing regulations with incentives, (d) developing budget-based outcomes, and (e) measuring success by customer satisfaction (Moe, 1994:111).

The Gore report is based on what it termed as four bedrock principles of executive branch entrepreneurial management (Moe, 1994:113). First, effective entrepreneurial governments cast aside red tape, shifting from systems in which people are accountable for following rules to systems in which they are accountable for achieving results. Second, effective entrepreneurial governments insist on customer satisfaction. Third, effective entrepreneurial governments transform their cultures by decentralising authority. Fourth, effective entrepreneurial governments constantly find way to make governments work better and cost less.

Whatever support the reinventing government idea has generated specially among politicians in USA it has also received its share of criticisms from academics. The criticisms are both practical as well as ideological. It has been pointed out that 'government has never established over the years a tradition and a structure that would ensure consistent attention by competent managers to the day-to-day operations of departments and agencies', (Sundquist, 1995:398). At the same time customer centered model of change has been criticised for using the wrong metaphor. Frederickson (1994) argues that citizens are not customers of government rather they are its owners who elect leaders to represent their interests.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Administrative reform, as has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, is an important concept. Notwithstanding the differences of opinion pertaining to what it means and what kind of strategies need to be adopted for its implementation in diverse cultures, unanimity of views prevail as to its importance in redesigning outdated civil

services and in bringing about efficiency and economy in the delivery of public services. It is widely recognised that there is very little alternative to administrative reform if one wishes to keep a civil service and its personnel in tune with changing time and needs of the clientele. Moreover, if policy makers are interested in organisational renewal, administrative reform can be an effective tool to do just that. Any change effort faces resistance of one kind or another and administrative reform is no exception to this trend. But such resistance can be overcome if timely and appropriate strategies are adopted and suitable and well-timed actions follow. The value of administrative reform can hardly be over emphasised in view of its manifold practical application. The emergence of three approaches as discussed earlier considerably broadened and enriched the concept of administrative reform. More importantly, administrative reform's appeal in spite of numerous setbacks and dismal failures, as a tool kit to fix multifarious problems facing developed and developing nations, is still considerable.

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CHAPTER 2

Major Administrative Reform Initiatives in Bangladesh

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Major characteristics of civil service systems in British India and in Pakistan are very much present in the civil service system of Bangladesh. The bureaucratic culture is distinctly British and not suited to the needs of today's citizens in an independent country. The components of the bureaucratic culture continue to affect the functioning of the civil service and moulding the behavioural patterns of civil servants. Bangladesh's inherited civil service system has undergone only cosmetic changes since independence of the country in 1971 despite formation of a number of high-powered commissions and committees by different governments to reform the public bureaucracy (Table 2.1). The bureaucracy is still characterised by centralisation of authority at the top of the hierarchy, closed career concept, security of term, preponderance of the cadre system, elitist orientation, abundance of rules and regulations, lack of respect for common people and lack of service orientation. The focus of the present chapter is to discuss and analyse the nature, composition and recommendations of major reform bodies as well as to review the implementation or non-implementation of recommendations of such reform bodies by successive governments. In terms of scope and focus, the committees and commissions can be placed into three more or less distinct categories—broad, mid-range

and narrow (Table 2.2). Reform bodies can also be categorised in terms of nature of their membership (Table 2.3). The discussions that follow indicate that among other things membership of the committees and the commissions were monopolised by civil servants either serving or retired—here was almost no interest on the part of governments to make the memberships of reform bodies representative of the various segments of the society.

2.2 1971-1975

The Awami League (AL) government headed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Mujib) assumed power in liberated Bangladesh. The AL in October 1970 won a landslide victory in the first ever general elections in united Pakistan capturing 167 out of 169 seats in the National Assembly from the then East Pakistan. The massive victory of AL in the elections transformed it as the only political party to represent the interests of Bengalis. At independence the AL formed a government on the basis of its 1970 electoral victory and Mujib assumed the leadership of both the party and the government as the unquestioned leader of Bengalis in early 1972 on his return to Bangladesh from a prison in Pakistan. Mujib government appointed three reform bodies, i.e. two committees and one commission during its three and a half years rule between December 1971 to August 1975.

Civil Administration Restoration Committee (CARC)

Within two weeks of liberation of Bangladesh from occupation of Pakistani armed forces, a Committee was appointed to facilitate restoration of civil administration in a war-ravaged and strife-torn country. The body known as the Civil Administration Restoration Committee (CARC) was constituted on 27 December 1971. All six members of the Committee including the chairman were civil servants. Hence it was an in-house and bureaucrat dominated Committee.

Mission

The CARC was given the responsibility to:

- a. examine and suggest ways for restoration of field administration;
- b. fix priorities and phases under which restoration of the administration may be implemented;

- c. suggest ways for absorption of all employees and amalgamation of offices of Pakistan government with Bangladesh government; and
- d. consider any other aspect of civil administration that the committee may consider desirable and necessary (Report of CARC, part 1, 1972, p. 9).

Significant Recommendations

The significant recommendations of the Committee, included:

- a. establishment of twenty ministries, three other secretariat organisations and seven constitutional bodies;
- b. detail specification of functions of civil servants at sub-divisional, district and divisional levels; and
- c. providing appropriate status and respect to officers and staff of civil administration as lawful organs of the government (Report of CARC, Part 1, 1972, pp. 2-8). The Committee felt that civil administration of the country should be premised on such guiding principles as democracy, socialism and secularism.

Outcome

Many recommendations of CARC were accepted by the government. This resulted in a reorganised secretariat with twenty ministries and a number of divisions, departments and other agencies under them. Implementation of other recommendations led to the formation of certain constitutional bodies like the Supreme Court, the High Court, the Public Service Commission, the Election Commission and the Office of Comptroller and Auditor General. The government did not accept CARC's recommendation to set up an Ombudsman. Most of the recommendations made by the Committee and accepted by the government were of interim nature and intended to put in place an administrative system at different levels in the model of the system that existed in the united Pakistan. It needs to be pointed out that in view of the Committee's mandate, composition and time constraint much could not be expected from its deliberations.

Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (ASRC)

On 15 March 1972 a four-member Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (ASRC) was appointed. The chairman of the

Committee was a noted political scientist, a distinguished public administration scholar and Vice Chancellor of the University of Dhaka. The other members were a US-trained economist and a member of the Planning Commission, a parliamentarian belonging to the ruling party and a senior generalist civil servant of the elite Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) and Secretary, Cabinet Affairs. The last member was also assigned the additional responsibility to act as secretary to the Committee.

Mission

The ASRC was asked:

- a. to consider the present structure of various services ... and determine the future structure keeping in view the fundamental needs and requirements of the government;
- b. to consider the amalgamation of all civil services ... into one unified service;
- c. to determine the principles of integration of the personnel of various services in the new structure and to determine inter se seniority of personnel of the different services having similar academic background and job experiences in the process of merger or amalgamation, in some cases structural changes envisioned;
- d. to determine the future recruitment policy in the government services at various levels keeping in view the educational and other job requirements; and
- e. to prepare and recommend a comprehensive scheme for administrative reorganisation (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, pp. iii-iv)

Diagnosis

The ASRC was severely critical of the public service. It observed that "the existing services were divided into too many distinct entities with artificial walls built around them with varying career prospects, lacking in professionalism and too much class and rank-oriented with very little opportunities to rise to the top for those who started their career in the lower ranks" (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, p. iv). The above observations made by ASRC almost a quarter century ago remain valid even today. The wide ranging review of the state of affairs of the public service also found that the service structure was

tailor-made to suit a colonial, capitalist and federal governmental system. Obviously, the situation was in clear contrast with the needs and aspirations of a country which was independent, socialist and unitary. The service structure was outdated, indolent and not responsive to the demands of the citizens. The procedures further added to the problems as these were complex, ponderous and confusing.

Significant Recommendations

The ASRCs recommendations had to be fundamental in nature as it attempted to lay the foundation of a modern civil service capable to cope with the multifarious problems facing a new, independent and war-ravaged country. The Committee made a number of significant recommendations which influenced and shaped the deliberations of committees and commissions appointed later on.

First, the Committee felt that division between former All-Pakistan and other Central Superior Services and the former Provincial Services as well as division between higher and lower classes be abolished and a continuous grading system from top to bottom should be substituted in each occupational group (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, p. 26).

Second, the Committee suggested that reservation of posts for various groups within the public service should be discontinued.

Third, all public servants, the ASRC recommended, should be organised in a single classes unified grading structure (UGS) covering the whole public service. The UGS would comprise of ten grades with appropriate number of pay levels matching different levels of skill and responsibility premised on job analysis (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, p. 26).

Fourth, to inculcate professionalism in the public service, the Committee suggested, division of all posts within it into two broad categories to be designated as Functional Posts and Area Group Posts (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, pp. 34-35). The occupants of the first category posts would possess pre-entry technical and vocational education and also those who would have to acquire necessary technical and vocational qualifications after joining their positions. The second group would consist of such posts that would not require any single functional expertise but relevant experience and necessary training for holding them.

Fifth, the ASRC called for designating posts in top three grades, i. e. I, II and III as Senior Policy and Management Posts and tightening

selection procedure for entrance into senior management positions (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, pp. 37-38).

Sixth, the Committee also suggested a detail plan as to how its proposal for UGS be implemented throughout the public service. The plan included: (i) commissioning of a major study to work out details of UGS and prepare a time schedule for its implementation; (ii) creation of an Administrative Management and Reforms Division (AMRD) with a permanent secretary as head by reorganising and expanding the then O&M Wing of the Establishment Division; (iii) placing the AMRD under the day-to-day supervision of a junior minister with the Prime Minister retaining the overall responsibility for it; and (iv) appointing a high-powered Implementation Committee under the chairmanship of a judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court with two parliamentarians, chairmen of two Public Service Commissions and Secretaries of the Ministries of Finance, Law, Personnel Division and proposed Administrative Management and Reforms Division as members to provide guidelines to the work of AMRD (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, pp. 46-47).

Seventh, the ASRC felt that individuals should be recruited to various grades in the public service on the basis of merit as tested by their performance in competitive public examinations. Persons with proven competence are appointed to technical posts laterally.

Eighth, in the area of training, the Committee made a number of recommendations that included: (i) creation of Training Wing in the Personnel Division to formulate a general training policy and promote and coordinate training programs of ministries and departments; (ii) setting up of separate institutes for post-entry training of young recruits and senior administrators and strengthening the facilities of the institution responsible for mid-career training.

Ninth, in the area of central personnel management the ASRC made a lot of important recommendations. These included: (i) creation of a Personnel Division attached to the Office of the Prime Minister staffed by professionally competent persons to undertake a variety of responsibilities in the areas of staffing, job analysis and evaluation, training and career planning; (ii) establishing a personnel cell in each ministry and department; (iii) promotions to higher positions be given on the basis of merit as demonstrated in appropriate examinations and recommendations of relevant departmental promotion committees, and (iv) a civil servant be allowed to remain in a given job for at least two years (Report of ASRC, Part 1, 1973, pp. 96-107).

The ASRC also made a number of specific recommendations to democratise the governance system and reduce the powers and functions of the central government civil servants operating at field level positions (Khan, 1991, pp. 58-59).

First, increasing devolution of power and authority to elected local governments at different levels—district, thana and union was forcefully argued to enable locally elected officials to provide leadership in developmental activities without interference from central government officials placed in the field. The local government was visualised to levy taxes within its jurisdiction and receive grants from the central government. A Local Government Service to be created whose members would operate in local level only. The functions of key official of the central government in the district, i.e. the deputy commissioner, would be reduced.

Second, different local level field tiers had to be rationalised with up-gradation of subdivisions into districts and abolition of divisions.

Third, separation of the judiciary from the executive had to be ensured for successful functioning of a democratic polity.

Fourth, at the central level the role of the secretariat needed to be restricted to: policy formulation, planning and evaluation of the executed plans and programs.

Outcome

The ASRC submitted its recommendations to the government in two phases. But there was no official response to the Committee's work till the end of Mujib government. It is difficult to understand why far-reaching recommendations of ASRC was shelved in spite of the fact that excepting the member-secretary all members including the chairman were close to Mujib both politically and personally. It is on record that Mujib was unhappy with the poor performance or lack of commitment of many senior civil servants. He knew the problems but did not want to go all the way to solve the malices. That created the paradox and consequently Mujib's lack of action.

But what is known is that senior generalist civil servants did not like the contents of the reports of the Committee. The leadership to resist the acceptance and the implementation of ASRC's recommendations was given by the senior members of the erstwhile CSP and spearheaded by the CSP Association. The implementation of ASRC's recommendations would have resulted (Khan, 1991: 82) in abolition of their privileged position in terms of promotion and posting and opened up greater

opportunities to functional and specialist civil servants within the domain of the public service and also contributed to the effective political control of civil servants. The CSP Association submitted a representation to the Committee containing a set of its demands. These included: opposition to amalgamation of different civil services into one; sought reservation of all key posts in the secretariat and majority of field level positions for its members as in the past; and wanted its nomenclature to be changed to Bangladesh Administrative Service (BAS) in line with Indian Administrative Service (IAS) (Khan and Zafarullah, 1982).

Also by the time the last report was submitted in mid 1974 Mujib's control over population at large and politics in particular became uncertain. Opponents to his government got organised. Economy started to slide due to the combination of factors including famine, mismanagement and inability to get required funds and aid from international donors and foreign countries. All these led Mujib to depend more heavily on senior civil servants to run the country. Some of the senior civil servants found this opportunity heaven-sent to consolidate and strengthen their positions vis-à-vis the government and ward off any attempt to restructure the civil service system.

National Pay Commission (NPC-I)

A National Pay Commission (NPC-I) was appointed on 21 July 1972 under the chairmanship of a retired secretary to the government. Besides the chairman, there were nine other members. The membership of the Commission included three full-time and five part-time members. The full-time members were all retired individuals with background in banking, police and technical education. The part-time members were all public servants, excepting one, representing such organisations as the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Defense, and the House Building Finance Corporation. A senior civil servant belonging to the erstwhile CSP was made member-secretary to the NPC-I.

Mission

The National Pay Commission (NPC-I) was assigned with a number of tasks. These included:

- a. reviewing the pay structure of all employees in the public sector keeping in view the government's policy of socialism; and

- b. recommending rationalisation and standardisation of pay scales of those who served under erstwhile central and provincial governments (Report of NPC-I, 1973, p. 1).

In addition, the Commission was asked to keep in mind a number of variables while making its recommendations. Those variables included: cost of living, resources at the disposal of the government, need to reduce disparity between the highest and the lowest income earners, need to attract and retain in the public sector highly talented technically and professionally qualified persons, the requirements of efficiency, equity and incentives for work and demand and supply relating to different professions and occupations (Report of NPC-I, 1973, p. 1). The Commission was also to work in close cooperation with the Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (ASRC).

Diagnosis

It is clear from the above that NPC-I was given a difficult job. On the one hand, it had to come up with such recommendations, as would attract the best possible candidates but on the other the twin requirements of meagre resources at the disposal of the government and the need to minimise the gap between the highest and the lowest income groups in the society to be kept in mind.

The NPC-I found a number of inadequacies and anomalies in the pay structure at that time. There was multiplicity of scales as well as diversity. The Commission identified as many as 2200 different scales of pay throughout the government. The situation was further complicated by diversity that existed in rates of increment and efficiency bars for similarly classified jobs (Khan, 1991, p. 54). It was noticed that though for majority of the posts time scales of pay were available, their time span varied significantly from two to twenty-five years.

Significant Recommendations

The guiding principles followed by NPC-I in recommending a rational pay structure were a liveable wage, social acceptability, functionally distinguishable levels of responsibility matched with standardised pay levels and motivation based on patriotic grounds (Khan, 1991:59). The NPC-I felt that a nine-tier, administrative structure with corresponding pay scales could meet the requirements of a rational structure in Bangladesh during next five years, i.e. 1973-1978 (Obaidullah, 1995:141).

Of the nine scales four would be normal direct entry tiers, three promotion tiers and two conversion tiers (Obaidullah, 1995:141). But the Commission's plan had to be modified to bring it in line with ASRC's recommendations. Eventually, the NPC-I recommended ten scales of pay to suit the ten service grades proposed by the ASRC.

Outcome

Some of the recommendations of the Commission were partially implemented. However, majority of the recommendations of the NPC-I were not implemented. Reasons can be offered as to why the Commission's recommendations suffered such a fate. First, compression of 2200 scales into 10 scales was very difficult task and it proved to be so at the implementation stage. Second, no major segment within the civil service supported the recommendations. Rather almost everybody who mattered opposed it. They felt that the NPC's recommendations were not based on proper evaluation of responsibilities of a particular scale and the corresponding pay. It has been stated that 'supervisory posts were downgraded in terms of pay and equalised with the grades of the supervised, creating deleterious effects on efficiency, morale and performance' (Obaidullah, 1995; 145). One of the consequences of such a situation was discontent and dissatisfaction among public servants. A large segment of public servants went to the court to challenge the implementation of NPC-I's recommendations and the verdict of the judiciary in most cases supported their standpoint (Report of Pay and Service Commission, 1977, p. 8).

2.3 1975-1982

The first military ruler of Bangladesh was Lieutenant-General Ziaur Rahman (Zia). Zia, a freedom fighter and a shrewd tactician, captured power in September 1975. Zia's accession to power was aided by a number of factors including his popularity among soldiers and support provided by key faction leaders within the army. A number of coups and counter coups between August-September 1975 created a chaotic situation within the army and facilitated the process of Zia's assumption of state power. One of the key casualties of the coups was the founding father of the nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most members of his immediate family. They were all killed. Zia's stay in power lasted little over five and a half years (September 1975 to May 1981). Zia continued

with the presidential system introduced by Mujib. But he allowed political parties their normal activities reversing Mujib's decision to rule the country with one party, i.e. Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BAKSAL). In the process Zia deliberately allowed anti-liberation and fundamentalist forces to gain a foothold in Bangladesh politics. This was a calculated move. Zia wanted to consolidate all forces opposed to the Awami League and thereby strengthen his position. His economic policy was premised on free flow of market forces. This was in contradiction to Mujib's socialist ideology. Zia also introduced an ideology 'Bangladeshi Nationalism' to counter Mujib's Bengali Nationalism.

Pay and Services Commission (P&SC)

The Pay and Services Commission (P&SC) was set up on 20 February 1976. The Commission was composed of thirteen members including the chairman. The P&SC was headed by a retired Secretary to the government. There were full-time and part-time members as well as departmental representatives. Four were part-time members and all of them were retired senior civil servants with background in civil, finance, police and judicial services. Of the three part-time members one was a senior Secretary to the government, another was a retired chief engineer and the last one came from the private sector. There were four departmental representatives in the Commission as members. They represented the Ministries of Industries, Education and Establishment Division and Planning Commission. The original member—secretary was changed in mid-way and was replaced by another senior civil servant. It has been alleged that the first member-secretary attempted to alter the recommendations of the Commission in favour of members of the former CSP cadre. The mischief was detected in time and the chairman and members asked the government to withdraw him. The government complied with the request of the Commission. He was promptly replaced.

Mission

The Pay and Services Commission (P&SC) was asked to:

- a. examine the existing pay and service structure of public sector employees excluding the defense services but including the civilians paid out of defense estimates and the employees of autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies, statutory corpora-

- tions, the universities (excluding teaching posts) and nationalised enterprises excluding workers;
- b. recommend a suitable service structure for the civil services along with their method of recruitment, training and deployment;
 - c. devise rational and simple principles for the amalgamation of employees of the erstwhile central and provincial governments performing similar duties and functions; and
 - d. recommend suitable pay structure including fringe benefits for civil services and employees of autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies, statutory corporations, universities (excepting teaching posts) and nationalised enterprises (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 7).

In making its recommendations pertaining to pay the Commission was instructed to take into consideration a number of factors including:

- a. functional needs and requirements of the government;
- b. job requirements for various services and posts;
- c. cost of living;
- d. resources of the government and public sector enterprises;
- e. reduction of disparity between the highest and the lowest salary level;
- f. attracting and retaining highly talented, trained, professionally and technically qualified persons in the public sector;
- g. maintenance of efficiency, equity and incentives for work; and
- h. demand and supply of various professions and occupations (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, pp. 7-8). The members of the P&SC were also asked to appraise themselves of the recommendations made earlier by ASRC and NPC-I and actions taken by the government to implement the recommendations of the latter. The Commission was directed to work in close cooperation with a commission appointed to recommend an appropriate pay structure for members of the armed forces.

The P&SC was given a rather broad mandate. It had the onerous task of examining both service and pay matters of all employees in the traditional public sector. This had to be accomplished within a given set of constraints. Added to these problems the expectations were high as to what the Commission would accomplish through its work. In other words, the Commission members had their hands full.

Diagnosis

Administrative inefficiency, the P&SC discerned, as one of the major factors damaging the prospect of planned development of the civil service. It, like the ASRC, termed the status of erstwhile constituted civil services as ambiguous primarily because the government at independence did not clarify the position of the CSP vis-à-vis other services. The practice of reservation of posts for those belonging to the CSP and denying entry of members of other services into its privileged domain enabled the CSP to monopolise key positions at the expense of other services which contributed to the creation and sustenance of a distinct and privileged class of elite civil servants. The Commission opined that development of the country depended on raising the status of the specialists and discontinuation of the CSP as a cadre.

Significant Recommendations

In making the recommendations, the Pay and Services Commission (P&SC) realised the complexities involved in running the modern government and the requirements of such a government. It understood that an all-purpose civil service had to be built with individuals possessing technical and scientific qualifications as well as those who were intellectually gifted and capable of working under political direction. The P&SC made a number of significant recommendations covering wide areas within the broad canvass of the civil service. First, merit should be the sole determinant for appointment in the civil service and advancements therein and a system should be devised to ensure proper identification of the meritorious one (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 287).

Second, the meaning of the term civil service was clarified. The term civil service should include all functioning in the traditional government sector, excluding those who are in the military (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 287).

Third, the barrier between the erstwhile CSP and other specialist and non-specialist services should be removed by effectuation of equal initial scales of pay and ensuring equitable opportunities for advancement to the top for all (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 287).

Fourth, a Superior Policy Pool (SPP) to be designated as the open structure consisting of posts requiring all-round experience, administrative leadership and high-level coordination is constituted at the top of the civil service with brighter officers drawn from all

branches of the civil service on the basis of merit and proven ability (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 287).

Fifth, for the major functional areas of the government, cadre concept should be accepted and adopted. Organised cadre service should be formed at the top of the civil service.

Sixth, the civil service in Bangladesh should consist of four tiers with administrative, top management and specialist at the top and messengerial and custodian group at the bottom of the ladder with executive and middle management group and ministerial, inspectorial, technical and support group in between. The top most tier and the one following that tier be designated as levels A&B. A level cadre should be constituted with twenty-nine services.

Seventh, the promotion policy is to be formulated in such a way so as to encourage those with productivity and high calibre to reach at the top.

Eighth, the Ministry of Establishment should be abolished. In its place, a Civil Service Ministry should be established and placed under the supervision of the head of the government with an O&M Division, a Training and Career Planning Division and a Recruitment and Service Management Division (Report of P&SC, 1977, Vol. 1, p. 290). The Civil Service Ministry should constantly review and advice the head of the government on the machinery of the government and the needs for adjustment (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p. 290). At the same time, the responsibility for recruitment and management of twenty-nine constituted services should be given to the particular administrative ministry while the Civil Service Ministry would manage the Superior Policy Pool (Report of P&SC, Vol. 1, 1977, p.290). One of the major tasks of the Civil Service Ministry would be to undertake comparative research to keep itself familiar with experiences in civil service management in other countries.

Finally, 52 scales of pay were recommended to reduce the multiplicity of pay scales as well as to allow alternative scales for particular categories without disturbing the overall pay structure (Khan, 1991, p. 60). The Commission felt that two things needed serious consideration and action. Individuals with appropriate qualifications and background should be adequately remunerated. Up-gradation and proper evaluation of those jobs that needed creativity and imagination had to be undertaken on a priority basis.

Outcome

The government moved slowly and contiguously to consider and implement some of the key recommendations of the P&SC. It took the government two years to implement, in modified forms, the Commission's accepted recommendations. The process was long. Five cabinet committees worked out the modalities of reform implementation.

First, twenty-eight services under fourteen main cadres were created within the civil service. This action by the government signalled its acceptance in principle of the cadre concept.

Second, the government in 1977 provided for twenty-one scales of pay through the introduction of New National Grades and Scales of Pay (NNGSP). In the process the government drastically scaled down the number, i.e. fifty scales of pay which P&SC recommended. But the NNGSP satisfied very few people. Civil servants showed their displeasure utilising various strategies. Strikes, meetings and demonstrations had adverse impact on the administration. Many civil servants felt injustice had been done to them in fixing pay scales. Protests came from all categories of employees. Professionals felt ignored as their rightful status was not reflected in the pay scale. They believed that this mischief was the handiwork of senior generalist civil servants.

Finally, a Senior Services Pool (SSP) was constituted by the government. The SSP was modelled in light of the P&SC's call for creation of a Superior Policy Pool (SPP). But the SSP Order was formulated and implemented in such a manner that the objective behind SSP was wilfully ignored. Induction of a large number of mid-ranking and senior generalist civil servants without examinations and proper screening violated the very principles on which the SSP was premised. Initially only three civil servants belonging to specialist cadres were allowed to join the SSP. This action seriously undermined the credibility of the SSP in the eyes of non-generalist civil servants. This action, i.e. automatic induction of generalist civil servants into the SSP clearly demonstrated the enormous power of the generalist civil servants vis-à-vis others within the civil service system.

2.4 1982-1989

Lieutenant-General Hussain Muhammad Ershad (Ershad) the then chief of Army Staff captured power in March 1982. Ershad's accession

to power was a well-planned move. He took his time and judged the situation well. Justice Abdus Sattar, the hand-picked Vice President of General Zia succeeded him to the presidency through a presidential election. But Sattar proved to be inadequate to contain factions within the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and corruption among ministers. The BNP was in disarray in terms of leadership, factionalism, mismanagement and wide-ranging corruption. Ershad seized the situation to his advantage. He started talking openly to the press about military's role in running the state. This move was intended to consolidate his position within the military as well as to put pressure on hapless Sattar to create institutional mechanisms to formally recognise and accommodate military's interests within the country's highest policy making body. As soon as Ershad took over control of the country he made a number of promises which included the familiar ones like transferring power to civilians, ending corruption, streamlining administration and decentralisation of power. There was very little new in Ershad's promises. Military dictators as a ritual make such promises when they capture power in developing countries.

In this section a number of reform initiatives undertaken during the Ershad era will be discussed. One of the important reform body's deliberations will not be considered here. The Committee for Administrative Reorganisation/Reform (CARR) is the body in question. Its recommendations relate totally to the democratisation of the governance system at the local and sub-national levels and its linkages with the national politico-administrative system. Here as our focus is on the reform efforts of the national civil service it will not be relevant to include CARR in the discussions that follow.

Beside CARR, a number of committees and two pay commissions were appointed. The committees included two martial law committees, a committee on irregularities, a secretaries committee a special committee, a cabinet sub-committee and a council committee.

Martial Law Committee-I

A five-member Martial Law Committee for Examining Organisation Set Up of Ministries/Divisions, Departments, Directorates and Other Organisations Under Them (MLC) was appointed on April 18, 1982 under the chairmanship of a Brigadier. The other members of the Committee were two Lieutenant-Colonels, one Major and one mid-ranking civil servant. The latter was made secretary to the Committee.

Mission

The Committees' responsibilities included:

- a. to review and recommend charter of duties of various Sections, Branches, Wings, Divisions and Departments;
- b. to scrutinise existing and sanctioned manpower ... to actual requirement;
- c. to record observations on administrative inefficiency, irregularities and recommend steps to improve efficiency; and
- d. to suggest rationalisation of organisation and functions of Ministries/Divisions, Departments and related organisations (Report of MLC-I, Phase 1, 1982, p. 45).

Diagnosis

The members of MLC observed that some senior civil servants made it a practice to approach the chief executive directly for creation of new ministries and divisions and expansion of the size of the new ones ignoring the Ministry of Establishment. This practice contributed to unnecessary increase in the number of civil servants. The Committee made a cryptic comment about the situation obtaining at that time 'the Parkinson's law about proliferation of organisations found its full play in Bangladesh' (Report of MLC-I, Phase 1, 1982, p. 9). The MLC found that attempts were made deliberately to bypass the Public Service Commission to recruit departmentally persons with lower qualifications and of lesser merit as compared to the requirements of the positions. Many instances of inefficiencies, irregularities and concentration of administrative and financial powers at the top echelons of the hierarchy were also noticed.

Significant Recommendations

The MLC made a number of recommendations pertaining to its area of investigation. These included among others:

- a. reduction in the number of ministries/divisions, constitutional bodies/commissions, departments/directorates/subordinate offices, public statutory corporations and the personnel within;
- b. delegation of administrative and financial powers down the hierarchy;

other members were four Lieutenant Colonels, one Major, one Joint Secretary and one Deputy Secretary. The latter was asked to act as the member-secretary to the MLC-II.

Mission

The MLC-II's responsibilities included:

- a. to examine the organisational structure in relation to the aims and objectives of the organisations;
- b. to review /revise the charter of duties of the functionaries of the organisations;
- c. to examine the staffing pattern of the organisations;
- d. to rationalise the organisational structure; and
- e. to record observations on management problems, administrative inefficiency, irregularities and recommend remedial measures (Report of MLC-II, 1984, p. 2).

The MLC-II took into cognisance the report of another committee set up earlier under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary. This committee looked into public statutory organisations also. It made certain observations and recommended abolition/merger/amalgamation in certain cases.

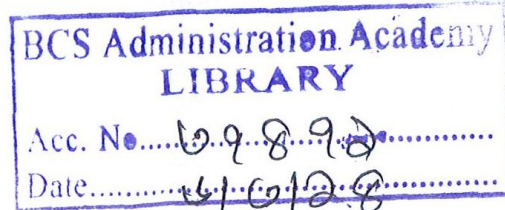
Diagnosis

The MLC-II observed that public statutory organisations grew in size beyond proportions as compared to actual need. The Committee encountered resistance in its effort to reorganise the organisations under review. There was no chain of command and no instruction manual in most of the organisations. Also records were not properly kept. Administrative and financial powers were concentrated at the top.

Significant Recommendations

The Committee's recommendations included:

- a. preparation of organisation charts, manuals, annual activity report;
- b. setting up O&M units in bigger corporations;
- c. delegation of more administrative and financial powers down the hierarchy;



- d. timely release of funds from ministries;
- e. promotion be based on merit and training to be availed by component officials, and
- f. effectuation of revised organisation charts (Report of MLC-II, 1984, pp. 14-16).

Outcome

Many of the recommendations of the Committee were accepted and implemented by the government after scrutiny. The implementation of MLC-II's recommendations led to reduction in the number of public statutory organisations (autonomous, semi-autonomous bodies and allied organisations) from 155 to 109. The Committee's work resulted in identifying surplus manpower and consequently 28,740 posts were slashed. Organisation charts for various organisations were also approved by the government in line with the recommendations of MLC-II.

Committee for Examination of Irregularities (CEI)

A Committee for Examination of Irregularities in Appointment and Promotion of Officers and Staff in the Government (CEI) was constituted in September 1982 under the chairmanship of a Brigadier. The other members included a member of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission, a Joint Secretary, a Lieutenant-Colonel and a Deputy Secretary. The Deputy Secretary was designated as also the secretary to the Committee.

Mission

The Committee's tasks were:

- a. to examine the irregularities committed in the appointment and promotion of officers and staff in various ministries/divisions/departments ... and fix a deadline by which all recruitment rules are to be framed and notified;
- b. to examine the circumstances in which ad-hoc appointments were continued ... and recommend appropriate measures;
- c. to examine the circumstances under which certain posts were taken out of the purview of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC);
- d. to examine the cases of unusual delay in implementing the recommendations of the BPSC regarding appointment;

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- e. to examine the system of encadrement of officers in different cadres of the BCS with a view to streamlining procedure; and
- f. to suggest ways and means to streamline recruitment/promotion in various ministries/divisions/departments and development projects (Report of CEI, 1983, pp. 131-132).

Significant Recommendations

The CEI made as many as one hundred recommendations under fourteen headings. The major recommendations of the Committee included:

- a. framing of new recruitment rules to regularise adhoc and irregular appointments and to avoid recurrence of irregularities in appointments and promotion;
- b. framing of Seniority Rules and Gradation Lists of officials and staff;
- c. constitution of Selection Committees and Departmental Promotion Committees in ministries/divisions, departments/directorates/offices;
- d. appointment and promotion to be made strictly in accordance with relevant rules and regulations;
- e. ad-hoc appointments should be made when absolutely necessary for a limited period and regularised within that period;
- f. the system of taking services and posts out of the purview of the Public Service Commission (PSC) should be resorted to in only very special circumstances;
- g. ensuring that the recommendations of the PSC regarding appointment and promotion are implemented on time;
- h. appointment under development projects be made strictly in accordance with recruitment rules;
- i. recruitment to different cadres/sub-cadres of the Bangladesh Civil Service should be made strictly in accordance with the Bangladesh Recruitment Rules, 1981;
- j. regularly appointed eligible officers should be encadred;
- k. time scales of pay be given to all officers; and
- l. appointment and encadrement of officers in the Senior Services Pool should be made on the basis of selection by the PSC and the strengthening of PSC by appointment of more members (Report of CEI, 1983, pp. 1-18).

pay with taka 900 fixed as the minimum salary and taka 10,000 as the maximum salary per month (Bangladesh Gazette Extraordinary 14 September 1991). It has been observed that since Bangladesh's independence for the first time RNSP contained a revised pay scale which was at par with the then inflation rate to prevent standard of living from further erosion (Obaidullah, 1995, p. 153). It needs to be pointed out that though the government agreed on twenty scales of pay but NPC-III's recommendation relating to highest and lowest pay of taka 13000 and 1250 respectively was substantially moderated during implementation and resultant RNSP.

Other Committees

During Ershad era, beside major committees and commissions as discussed earlier, a number of high-level committees and a cabinet sub-committee were constituted between 1985 and 1987 to review critical micro problems afflicting the functioning of the civil service. The membership of these committees was confined to cabinet ministers, top military brass and senior civil servants.

Secretaries Committee

The Secretaries Committee on Administrative Development (SCAD) was constituted on 20 April 1985 under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Cabinet Division, to solve critical problem of inadequate promotion prospect in various cadre services. The Committee recommended that status quo in those ten cadre services be maintained where promotion prospect had been satisfactory.

Special Committee

The Special Committee (SC) was appointed on 23 December 1985 to review the structure of the Senior Services Pool (SSP) and anomalies caused by its (SSP's) introduction. The Committee was headed by the Chief of Navy and the Deputy Chief Martial Law Administrator (DCMLA). The Committee's recommendations included: (a) continuation of SSP as a cadre; (b) entry into SSP at the level of Deputy Secretary only through examinations to be conducted by the Public Service Commission; (c) promotion within SSP would be strictly on the basis of merit; (d) members of technical cadres to be inducted into SSP on merit; and (e) tenure of secretaries be limited to eight years to ensure

greater opportunities for promotion at higher levels of administration (Khan, 1994, p. 23).

Cabinet Sub-Committee

The Cabinet Sub-Committee was constituted on 3 June 1987 to examine the report of the Secretaries Committee and the Special Committee. The Sub-Committee was headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. Two senior cabinet ministers were members of the Committee. Initially, the Sub-Committee endorsed most of the recommendations of the Special Committee. It also made a number of recommendations including creation of 50% of posts of Deputy Secretaries and Senior Deputy Secretaries within the pay scale of taka 4200-5200 for making SSP more attractive and selection of Joint Secretaries by the Council Committee. The Sub-Committee opposed Special Committee's recommendations concerning fixation of tenure for Secretaries on the ground that it would be an unwise move.

Council Committee

The Council Committee on Senior Appointments and Services Structure considered reports of both the Special Committee and the Cabinet Sub-Committee on 31 October 1987 and upheld most of the recommendations of the former and a few of the latter. The Council Committee made a number of recommendations on its own. Its recommendations included continuation of SSP as a cadre; limiting entrance into SSP at the level of Deputy Secretary; and keeping secretaries tenure open. But the recommendations of the Council Committee were not approved by the President. The President met several times with members of the Cabinet Sub-Committee. On the basis of such meetings the Cabinet Sub-Committee came up with a new set of recommendations which received presidential approval on 2 June 1989. The approved recommendation included: (a) abolition of the SSP; (b) filling up of posts of Deputy Secretaries and Joint Secretaries by promotion on the basis of quota reservation for various cadres; and (c) no quota reservation for any cadre the posts of Additional Secretaries and Secretaries (Khan, 1994, pp. 24-35).

2.5 1991-1996

Khaleda Zia, widow of late President Ziaur Rahman, became Prime Minister in March 1991 after her party Bangladesh Nationalist Party

(BNP) won majority seats in the parliamentary elections held in that year under the supervision of a caretaker government. Khaleda Zia's five year rule was marked by constant confrontation with major opposition party the Awami League which ultimately resulted in all the opposition political parties boycott of the parliament during the last two years of her government. Economic policies of her government were guided by the belief that deregulation and privatisation would bring about prosperity. But the prosperity that resulted was confined to few politicians and businessmen who were connected with the ruling party. In the name of opening the economy, opportunities were provided to fortunate few to plunder the national exchequer. One crisis after another in the economic arena made things difficult for the common people. The bureaucracy became a place where loyalty to the ruling party mattered in terms of posting, transfer and promotion especially at the higher echelon. A number of scandals became public in which a minister in-charge of the Establishment Ministry took bribes to the tune of crores in the name of giving promotions to officials. A number of senior ministers were involved in large-scale corruption. The civil servants lost faith in their political masters. They became dispirited, frustrated and disenchanted. Political victimisation became prominent. There was no motivation for civil servants to put in their best.

Khaleda Zia was not interested in administrative reform. Consequently, there was no political commitment to bring about meaningful changes within the civil service. Only one reform committee was set up that even did not submit its recommendations during Khaleda Zia's tenure of office. Two cabinet sub-committees also delivered nothing in concrete terms.

Administrative Reorganisation Committee (ARC)

The ARC was appointed in August, 1993. The Committee consisted of six members including the chairman, all of them were senior civil servants either retired or serving. The junior-most member was designated as member-secretary to the Committee.

Mission

The ARC was asked to do the following:

- i. to review the government's administrative structure and staffing patterns in ministries; and

- ii. to ascertain actual personnel need; and (iii) to make proposals for re-organising the machinery of government to meet the new demands placed on the civil service (Khan, 1994:25).

The Committee submitted its report to the government only recently after three time extension of its tenure. The recommendations of the ARC were finalised after conducting extensive surveys on functions, workloads, equipment, objective conditions, practical situation, economic resources and other relevant matters of public organisations (*The Independent*, 29 January 1996).

Significant Recommendations

The Committee made a number of recommendations that touched the public service, the judiciary and the legislature. The relevant recommendations are:

- i. reduction of the number of ministries from present 35 to 22 and slashing of the number of administrative organisations from 257 to 224;
- ii. abolition of 47 organisations and reduction of 43 others through merger or reorganisation;
- iii. provisional structure for the office of Ombudsman;
- iv. reduction of the Planning Commission to a much slimmer body styled as the National Planning Organisation to be responsible for enunciation of economic and development policies and formulation of national plan under the headship of a principal secretary;
- v. renaming of the Ministry of Finance as the Ministry of Finance and Economy;
- vi. creation of a Secretariat for the Supreme Court for handling all work arising out of the separation of the judiciary from the executive;
- vii. separation of audit from accounts to save the government from being drowned with unresolved and irresolvable audit objections;
- viii. provision for office assistance and small fund for all members of parliament; and
- ix. reduction in the number of existing missions abroad (*The Independent*, 30 August 1996; *The Daily Star*, 30 August 1996).

The ARC members felt that if their recommendations were implemented a saving of taka 174 crore would result and 46,276 civil servants would become redundant. The government has not taken any decision as yet on the recommendations of the Committee. This is understandable as a new government under the leadership of the Awami League chairperson Sheikh Hasina has assumed power after the successful completion of the parliamentary elections in June 1996 held under the auspices of a caretaker government. During the tenure of Khaleda Zia government two cabinet sub-committees were set up under the leadership of two senior cabinet ministers. One sub-committee looked as how to bring about efficiency in the civil service while the other considered ways and means to remove pay discrimination among members of cadre civil services and those who belonged to other civil services. The first committee prepared a report while the second committee even did not do that. But the government neither did take any action on the report of the committee on efficiency nor made it available to the public. Deliberations of both the committees and their recommendations are not known.

2.6 1996-2001

The leader of the Awami League, Sheikh Hasina's assumption of power in June 1996 after her party's victory in the parliamentary elections of 12 June 1996 marks the return of the Awami League to power after a lapse of twenty-one years.

National Pay Commission-IV (NPC-IV)

Within two months of assuming office the new government announced the appointment of the National Pay Commission-IV (NPC-IV). The Commission consists of fifteen members including the chairman. Of the members three are full-timers and the rest are part-timers. The full-time members and the chairman are all retired senior civil servants.

The part-time members include an economist from the University of Dhaka, President of the Bangladesh Employers Association, a member of the Planning commission, a retired professor of Dhaka Medical College, a former chairman of Capital Development Authority, a former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, a well-known gynaecologist, a representative of the army and a representative each from the Ministries of Industry, Law and Finance not below the rank of the Joint Secretary

(*The Daily Janakantha*, 19 August 1996), A Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance will act as member-secretary to the Commission. Though all the full-time members are retired civil servants still some of the part-time members have been chosen from different professional and other groups. But it needs to be mentioned that all the representatives of three ministries and member-secretary are serving civil servants. So the civil servants—retired and serving—have a comfortable majority in terms of membership of the Commission.

Mission

The NPC-IV has been asked to make recommendations on the following:

- i. an appropriate pay structure for officials and employees;
- ii. other facilities, i.e. house rent, medical treatment, transportation that are outside pay;
- iii. an appropriate policy guideline for re-fixing pay allowances and pension of civil servants in view of changes in the prices of commodities;
- iv. appropriate pension benefits for officials and employees;
- v. developing standards to correctly evaluate performance of officials and employees in terms of giving them rewards and punishment; and
- vi. inconsistencies in the pay structure (*The Daily Janakantha*, 19 August 1996).

In making their recommendations the Commission members will take into consideration the following:

- i. monthly expenditure of a family of four;
- ii. educational expenses of two children;
- iii. provisions for government taxes and revenue; and
- iv. income and expenditure of different units and organisations of the government (*Dhaka Courier*, 30 August 1996).

Significant Recommendations

NPC-IV recommended for 20 scales of pay with the lowest pay being Tk. 1800 and highest pay fixed at Tk. 18000. The Commission also suggested doubling of medical and conveyance allowances for all

categories of all public servants. It has also been reported that the Ministry of Finance has decided to allocate Tk. 15000 crores in the next budget to meet the expenditure to be incurred in implementing the recommendations of the Commission.

Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)

A seven-member Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) was constituted with a former Cabinet Secretary as its chairman. The membership of the Commission was dominated by the members of the erstwhile CSP. The chairman, the NGO representative, the political category's representative, the only permanent member all belonged to the erstwhile CSP. The member-secretary belonged to the BCS (Administration) cadre. The composition of the Commission has been criticized by professional associations and experts in the field as biased and ill-motivated. It was widely apprehended that the composition of the Commission will frustrate and derail the government's attempt to reform and revitalise the public service.

Mission

The terms of reference of the Commission were:

- a. Examine and identify implementable recommendations of:
 - Public Administration Efficiency Study, 1989
 - Public Administration Sector Study, 1993
 - Towards Better Government in Bangladesh, 1993
 - Government That Works: Reforming Public Sector, 1996;
- b. Recommend measures for improving the quality and standard of service, achieve transparency and efficiency;
- c. Recommend steps towards rightsizing the government and determine the scope and nature of its activities;
- d. Examine the organisation and structure of civil services and the system of incentives now prevalent and recommend measures to make it more effective and dynamic, suited to the needs of time;
- e. Make recommendations for necessary legal and procedural changes;

- f. Recommend measures for administrative decentralisation and reorganisation of local government structure;
- g. Recommend steps to curb corruption in public service;
- h. Recommend measures for strengthening parliamentary vigilance over various functions of government; and
- i. Recommend measures for creation of awareness for effecting economy in public expenditure, ensuring value for money and improved quality of service.

The Commission, from time to time, submitted its recommendations spelling out financial implications as well as the mode of implementation. The terms of reference (TOR) of the Commission were too broad. It appears everything under the sun falls within its purview. Taking into consideration the composition of ARC one wonders whether it can even act as a recommendatory body let alone perform such other crucial functions of supervisory or monitoring in terms of implementable recommendations of the body. The chairman of ARC submitted his resignation to the government on the ground that he did not receive any cooperation from civil servants in performing his duties. The government accepted his resignation. Another member of the Commission was also resigned. Also there was growing disenchantment with the performance of the expert member and her credibility was rather low among other members of the Commission.

Administrative Reorganising Committee (ARC)

The Administrative Reorganisation Committee (ARC) was formed under the chairmanship of Nurunnabi Chowdhury, secretary to the government. The ARC worked for over three years (1993-1996) to undertake a detailed analysis of the manpower requirements of the civil service. The ARC recommended significant changes to the cadre system but the proposals faced massive opposition from the senior civil servants. Then the government quickly abandoned its plans for change. Even though a consensus was reached, there was no further action (CPD, 2002).

Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC)

Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) was constituted in January 1997 with the former Secretary ATM Shamsul Haque as its

Chairman. The Commission was constituted with broad terms of reference for reform of central government public administration. The Commission submitted its report in June 2000 (UNDP, 2006:6).

Mission

The PARC responsibilities included:

- a. to recommend policies, programs and activities to improve the level of efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency in public organisations;
- b. to enable them to fulfil the government's commitment to ensure socio-economic development and reach out its benefits to the people. (CPD, 2001, p. 5);
- c. to advise the government on issues of organisation and civil service; and
- d. to restructure the outmoded system of administration (PARC Report 2006).

Diagnosis

The first and second Chairmen both resigned after short periods and the third and last Chairman, Dr. ATM Shamsul Haq, did not take over until May 1998. The Commission's original term of two years was extended at that time to November 2000.

Significant Recommendations

The Commission's made three types of recommendations-interim, short-term and long-term for administrative reform in areas such as defining the mission and functions of the public offices; affirming professionalism in the civil service; performance monitoring and result-oriented performance, audit of government agencies; delegation of powers to subordinate and field offices; open and free access to government documents and reports for the sake of transparency and accountability; separation of judiciary from the executive; separation of audit from accounts; simplification of outdated laws, rules, regulations and forms (GOB, 2000). The Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) proposed the preparation of performance standards and a citizen's charter for three ministries and five important organisations; the

constitution of three clusters of closely related ministries—general, economic and socio-political infrastructure; and the creation of three public service commissions—one for general services, another for technical services and a third for education services (Jahan, 2006:6).

The major recommendations of the PARC included:

- a. determination of missions and functions of the public offices;
- b. formation of a professional policy making group “Senior Management Pool”;
- c. lateral entry into the civil service;
- d. reduction of the number of ministries from 36 to 25 and the abolition of 6 organisations;
- e. establishment of the Supreme Court Secretariat;
- f. establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman;
- g. the local Councils/Parishads at the district, Upazila and Union should have overall authority of coordination for development activities;
- h. establishment of an Independent Commission against Corruption;
- i. establishment of a Criminal Justice Commission;
- j. monetisation of public service benefits; and
- k. establishment of a Public Administration Reform Monitoring Commission (CPD, 2001).

Other Recommendations

Improving the Delivery of Public Services

The recommendations included significantly greater delegation of authority within agencies; specification and monitoring of performance standards; greater public access to information about agencies including published performance standards in the form of a Citizens’ Charter and a Freedom of Information Act; a shift towards value for money audit (and the long-overdue separation of audit from accounts); and market-based salaries for the civil service.

Reforming the Civil Service

Eliminate or at least reduce the balkanisation caused by the cadre system; increase the proportion of entrants appointed on merit; increase

competition for senior positions; improve pay, particularly at more senior levels; link promotion to performance; lengthen rotation times in posts; and strengthen training and development.

Reorganising Institutions and Rationalising Manpower

The Commission's general thesis was that:

- i. the government undertakes functions which could either be privatised or contracted out;
- ii. there are too many organisations for the functions that do need to be performed, resulting in overlapping and redundant functions;
- iii. a large number of existing ministries and other organisations could consequently be abolished or merged; and
- iv. there are far too many staff in the civil service in lower grades and not enough in higher grades.

PARC's review covered ministries and their subdivisions and not "autonomous and semi-autonomous Bodies", including public corporations and SOEs. PARC recommended that these manpower reductions be achieved entirely through attrition (Laking, 2001: pp. 80-81).

Restructuring Field Administration and Decentralisation

The Commission's terms of reference were limited to advice on devolution of powers to local government within the existing proposed four-tier local government structure and decentralisation of central government functions.

The report identified two types of problems:

1. failure to complete the devolution of powers to local government envisaged in the local government reforms;
2. a continued high degree of detailed central control by ministries of the local activities of government departments.

Only one of the four tiers of local government—the Union Parishad—was fully in place. Its problems were lack of resources and an ambiguous relationship to locally deployed central government officials. A second set of problems was the continued interference by the secretariat in the detailed activities of field agencies. So central ministries—particularly

at the *thana* or Upazila level—continued to decided local priorities, regardless of the theoretical decentralisation of policy implementation to departments operating in the field or the devolution of control of these functions to local government. PARC's recommendations on local government were designed to ensure that the functions and the resources of central government were effectively transferred to local government:

- a. by transferring the "functions, personnel and budget" of relevant service delivery departments to the Zila and Upazila; and
- b. by abolishing the division-level offices of government departments, transferring further development functions to local government and empowering local government to appoint its own personnel. The problems of the weak revenue base of local government were addressed only in passing with a proposal for revenue sharing.

Establishment of a Senior Management Pool

PARC recommended that the Senior Management Pool (SMP) should be introduced in the Secretariat. Induction into the SMP at the level of Deputy Secretary would be on the basis of competitive examination to be conducted by the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC), which would ensure scope for representation of all cadres at the Secretariat and also facilitate fast track promotion for the meritorious officers (UNDP, 2005:17).

Pay Policy

The recommendations on pay were based on a principle of "market-oriented competitive wages and salaries to civil servants as soon as possible". Financial institutions and trading enterprises would be excluded from control. For the non-market public sector pay policy would be based on cashing up non-monetary benefits, regular market-related reviews and cost-of-living adjustments. The result would be a significant increase in pay rates for the top end probably paid for by reductions in numbers of lower-level staff (Laking, 2001: pp. 79-80).

Performance Assessment

The Commission recommended annual performance assessments based on "merit, efficiency, integrity, training and service records evaluated

on the basis of performance targets” and broad-banded salary scales to give flexibility at recruitment and enable pay to be linked to performance (Laking, 2001: pp. 79-80).

Creation of Decentralised BPSCs

The rationale for this proposal was to reduce the load on the existing BPSC and to make the Education and Technical BPSCs more focused in their assessments. There should be fewer candidates and fewer boards, which should increase the speed of recruitment and should also, increase the reliability and validity of the interview boards. It is important to have a degree of separation between the selection processes for the different cadres. This would enable assessment methods to be better focused on the requirements for the job and should lead to more efficient selection and more reliable and valid assessment. It will also enable more direct comparison to be made between candidates, since they would all be competing for similar jobs on a level playing field. Another positive side effect of this separation is that it would be harder for technically qualified candidates to opt for generalist positions, whereas the current system facilitates this (UNDP, 2005, p. 18).

Combating Corruption

PARC’s recommendations in area of corruption were:

1. Systemic: a general strategy of increasing competition (e.g. for utility services) and reducing and where possible eliminating administrative discretion;
2. Instrumental: (a) appointment of an Ombudsman; (b) a new standing Anti-Corruption Commission for investigating civil servants and elected officials, overseen by an Advisory Council; (c) a Criminal Justice Commission to deal with corruption in the police; and (d) regulation of funding of political parties. (Laking, 2001, pp. 81-84)
3. to create interactive relation with the civil society and establish the right to register complaint, get quick reply after enquiry and remedies for deviant behaviour of civil servants;
4. to insist on probity and accountability through transparent decision-making; and
5. to allow free access to information to concerned citizens and the press (UNDP, 2006:20).

Outcomes

PARC submitted its report in five volumes to the then Prime Minister in 2000-2001 with 598 short, medium and long term recommendations, but most of those remained on paper, except a few like pay hikes for public servants, and formation of the Independent Anti-Corruption Commission (IACC). It also suggested that merit should be the basis for appointments, postings, and promotions at all levels of the public administration. But no initiative was taken by the past governments to implement the recommendations (*The Daily Star*, 2009:1).

Citizens' Charter

The Public Administration Reform Commission (PARC) made a recommendation that Citizens' Charter would be introduced in all service-rendering public organisations to enable citizens to know their rights and to ensure the commitment of organisations to their service delivery and assure value for money (GoB, 2008; 8). In June 2007, the Caretaker Government (CTG) asked all ministries to formulate citizens' charters. Following this order, all ministries and most of the public agencies have already formulated citizen's charters. However, the initiative has not yet been proved to be successful due to a number of flaws (Khan, 2008:1).

One Stop Utility Bill Payment System

The PARC proposed allowing the payment of all public utility bills at one place at one time instead of several payments at different times and places. In 2003, the government introduced the "One Stop Utility Bill Payment System" to remove the hassle, waste of time and harassment of subscribers. Normally subscribers had to pay bills for four utility services—telephone, power, gas and water—to separate banks, running between branches and waiting in long queues for hours. Under the present system, a subscriber can pay all utility service bills at one bank (Jahan, 2006, p. 6).

Introduction of E-Governance

PARC recommended for introducing e-governance. The activities of various ministries have already been computerised. A Ministry of Science and Technology was created. Websites containing important information for several ministries have been launched. Ministry of Finance has developed software for budget planning, sensitivity and

impact analysis. Ministry of Communication has created a database containing information about contractors and tenders. It also created a project monitoring system for tracking project progress. The achievement of Bangladesh Planning Commission, in this regard, is noteworthy. It has a file sharing system through a Local Area Network (LAN), the capability for video- conferencing, and it maintains a digital library. It has also created software for interfacing between development and revenue budgets (Jahan, 2006, p. 6).

Establishment of a Senior Management Pool

This proposal had been on the table for a number of years and seems to be widely recognised as a good idea but had been successfully resisted by the cadre that would be responsible for implementing it. The BPSC should support the SMP proposal because it will support their brief of appointing the most meritorious officers (UNDP, 2005:17).

Achievements

However, the Committee recommendations were criticised for lack of consistency and were never implemented. Implementation of the Commission's recommendations was slow as the government at the initial stage approved only five of the 28 recommendations (Forum, 2011). Although PARC did not achieve its desired impact, its rationale appeared to have influenced some individuals within later governments. While the 1996-2001 AL government initiated the PARC process, the successive 2001-2006 BNP government reflected some of PARC's innovative rationale within policy making.

Fifth National Pay Commission (NPC-V)

The fifth National Pay Commission (NPC-V) was formed on September 7, 1996 under the chairmanship of former Cabinet Secretary M. Mujibul Haque. The fifth NPC's had full-time and part-time members from different disciplines including armed forces. Apart from fixing the minimum and maximum pay, the Commission also recommended, among other things, upward revision of house rents, health allowance, conveyances, voluntary retirement age and education and welfare allowances for the family members of civil servants. But all those recommendations went almost unheeded and the subsequent governments went on forming one commission after another.

Recommendations

The Haque Commission summarised the previous recommendations of earlier pay commissions and came up with a twenty-two recommendations. Its recommendations included replacement of car and other logistic supports with fixed monthly cash payment, reduction of voluntary retirement age from 25 years to 20, health schemes for family members and allocation for education of children up to the secondary level (Haque, July 19, 2004). The Haque Commission recommended minimum pay of Tk. 1850 and maximum pay ceiling of Tk. 18,000. But the government set minimum pay was at Tk. 1500 and maximum pay at Tk. 15,000. The ceiling of the lowest and the highest salaries was fixed between Tk. 1,500 and Tk. 15,000, with 20 grades.

Outcome

The last time the government had given a new pay scale to public servants was in 1997 as per the recommendations made by the fifth NPC.

Sixth National Pay Commission (NPC-VI)

In 2004, the government constituted thirteen members National Pay Commission (NPC-VI) headed by a Chairman with specific terms of reference to recommend two alternative proposals for pay revision and remuneration for public servants. Former Cabinet Secretary M Mujibul Haque had been once again made Chairman of the Commission with three permanent members. The three permanent members of the Commission were former Secretaries Abdullah Haroon Pasha and Manik Lal Samaddar and former Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission Monir Uddin Ahmed (Ahsan et. al, 2004). The Chairman himself and the remaining (nine) members were part-timers. A civil servant of additional secretary rank was selected by the Establishment Ministry to act as full-time member-secretary to the NPC-VI.

Mission

The NPC-VI would review the existing pay scales, allowances and other benefits of the employees of the government organisations and public bodies, and in formulating recommendations take into account the expenditure of a four-member family and educational expenses of two children, and resource position of the government and public

sector bodies. The Finance Ministry circular said the pay Commission would cover the employees in government, autonomous, nationalised commercial banks and financial institutions.

The mission of the commission included:

- a. to advise the government on salary structure based on existing system, where the government was liable to pay income tax on the employees' incomes;
- b. to recommended a pay structure for public servants/employees under which income tax would have to be paid by them on their salaries;
- c. to take into account the economic condition, the government's balance between its income and expenditure, and the average living cost in recommending the packages;
- d. to specifically recommend allowances and perks related to housing, medical treatment, transport and retirement benefits, along with the basic salary;
- e. to consider recommendation on monetising telephone charges and transport-vehicles of the officials and the employees as an alternative to the existing system;
- f. to make suggestions on the existing direct system of facility in this connection; and
- g. to make recommendations on lateral recruitment of eligible and qualified people in public administration, ways to accelerate economic growth and possible ways to enhance the required assets to meet the government's growing expenditure.

Recommendations

The sixth National Pay Commission had been given a time frame of six months to submit the report. But the deadline for submission of report was extended to January 31, 2005 from December 31, 2004 due to two consecutive floods. Later, the report was submitted to the Prime Minister on February 2, 2005 and a Secretary Committee headed by Cabinet Secretary Dr. Saadat Hossain was formed to review the report. The Secretary Committee had suggested four pay structures—a maximum basic pay of Tk. 25,500 and minimum Tk. 2,600, maximum Tk. 24,000 and minimum Tk. 2,500, maximum Tk. 23,500 and minimum Tk. 2,450 and maximum Tk. 23,000 and minimum Tk. 2,400. The government finally approved the lowest one (Haque, 2005).

Outcome

The government approved on May 16, 2005 the much talked-about sixth new pay scale for the public sector officials and employees, fixing the highest and lowest basic salaries at Tk. 23,000 and at Tk. 2,400 respectively. The new pay scale was approved raising salaries by 53 per cent on an average, for all public servants of 20 grades. The government considered re-fixing pay scales of the officials and employees of the government and other autonomous bodies in view of the increased cost of living (Haque, 2005).

2.7 CONCLUSION

Bangladesh's failed experience in implementation of major administrative reform measures can be explained if one looks at a number of factors. The factors are examined below.

First, political commitment, a precondition for successful implementation of reforms, has been missing. Successive governments have only given lip service to the call for overhauling the civil bureaucracy. Governments have been unwilling to pay the price for civil service reform. Rather, the intention has been to placate and appease all segments and factions within the civil service. The social, political and economic costs of keeping a hide-bound and inefficient bureaucracy have not been understood. Donor pressure forced governments to promise reforms that would not be kept. Some governments played the 'reform game' by appointing committees and commissions whose recommendations they had no intention to accept let alone implement. The motive was to gain political mileage with the public at least for the time being. But the people saw acts like this too many times before to believe that things would change for the better. In spite of numerous public utterances by political leaders in power people saw no reform forthcoming. Major administrative reforms became hostage to political opportunism and lack of foresight on the part of political leaders.

Second, bureaucratic resistance to reform is too well-known. Civil servants, especially the ones occupying senior positions, have been unwilling to reform themselves. The reform implementation committees under their leadership had to fail. Also bureaucratic domination—both civil and military—of the membership of the committees and commissions pre-determined recommendations of most of the reform bodies. These bodies failed to come up with far reaching and future-

oriented recommendations. The chairman and members of such committees and commissions were interested to maintain the status quo only. Recommendations were intended to adjust with the present and not to face challenges that lay ahead. Explanations were always ready as to why changes could not even be considered. Incrementalist approach became the order of the day. Modifications, not changes, were preferred and recommended. Maintenance of the status quo became the paramount goal of the bureaucracy.

Third, the mission of some of the committees and commissions were too broad. They were supposed to study everything and recommend about everything. That was not to happen. Time constraint, lack of professional staff and logistical support, infrequent holding of meetings all in varying degrees affected the quality as well as the timely presentation of reform bodies' findings and recommendations. Naturally, missions of committees and commissions remained ideals that could not even be reached.

Fourth, reform implementation committees were exclusively manned by bureaucrats—civil and military. Their deliberations suffered from the tendency to preserve narrow sectarian interests. Naturally, public interest was forgotten. Recommendations of reform bodies were probed, dissected by implementation committees and sometimes implemented by the government in disjointed manner at irregular intervals thereby negating the intended benefits of such recommendations. Advice and suggestions from professionals were never sought in the reform implementation process. Reliance on the ability and good intention of civil and military officers was the only course of action that remained open. But that proved to be more illusory than real.

Fifth, though there has been public discontent about the poor quality of the public service and dissatisfaction on the part of citizens about the behavioural patterns of public servants demonstrated in public administrator-citizen contact surprisingly very few initiatives been taken to organise citizens to reform the civil service. No attempt has been made to form public interest groups to campaign on specific issues like accountability, transparency, efficiency and productivity in the civil service.

One of the consequences of such a situation has been the lack of representation of citizens in either reform bodies or reform implementation bodies. The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have not been able to play their due role in mobilising citizens against inefficient

public services and excesses of public servants. The role of the press has also been rather inconsequential. The tendency of the press has been to highlight mismanagement and corruption in public service mostly at the lower level of the bureaucracy. Occasionally, lapses of senior civil servants are reported. Investigative reporting in terms of coverage and quality has improved in recent years. But desirable stage is yet to be attained. The role of the press in educating the public about the happenings within the public service has not been satisfactory. But the failure of the press is most glaring when it comes to prepare the citizens as how to cope with and change the public service. It is in the area of providing direction to the citizens that the press has failed most.

One of the reasons for such a failure has been the continuing dependence of the press on government advertisement and supply of newsprint at a subsidised rate. It is well known that civil servants play crucial role in giving advertisements and ensuring supply of newsprint without these many newspapers will face closure. It will appear from the discussions above that both the political and bureaucratic elite deliberately and purposively opposed implementation of major administrative reforms. For them change is a frightening prospect. They are comfortable to work with a system that they have inherited. They are unwilling to experiment with new ideas, new methods and new structures even when such changes are badly needed. Citizens' failure to organise as effective public interest groups as well as ineffective role of the press to act as harbinger of mass awareness also significantly contributed to the failure of major administrative reform measures in the civil service in Bangladesh.

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*Appendix***Table 2.1: Committees and Commissions appointed by governments to study different aspects of civil service and to recommend reform measures, 1971-1996**

Name of the Commission/Committee	Date of Appointment
Civil Administration Restoration Committee (CARC)	Appointed on 27 December 1971, submitted its report on 4 January 1972
Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (ASRC)	Appointed on 15 March 1972, submitted its reports in two phases in April 1973 and in May 1974
National Pay Commission I (NPC-I)	Appointed on 20 February 1976, submitted its main report on 27 May 1977
Martial Law Committee for Examining Organisational Set Up of Ministries/ Divisions, Departments, Directorates and Other Organisations Under Them I (MLC-I)	Appointed on 18 April 1982, submitted its reports in phases between 31 May and August 1982
Committee for Administrative Reorganisation/Reform (CARR)	Appointed on 28 April 1982, submitted its report on 22 June 1982
Martial Law Committee for Examining Organisational Set Up of Public Statutory Corporations (Autonomous/ Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Allied Organisations) II (MLCII)	Appointed on 8 May 1983, submitted its report on 29 February 1984
Committee for Examination of Irregularities in Appointment and Promotion of Officers and Staff in the Government (CEI)	Appointed on 9 September 1982, submitted its report on 17 April 1983
National Pay Commission II (NPC-II)	Appointed on 31 May 1984, submitted its report in 1985
Secretaries Committee on Administrative Development (SCAD)	Appointed on 20 April 1985, submitted its report in 1986
Special Committee to Review the Structure of the Senior Services Pool (SC)	Appointed on 23 December 1985, submitted its report in 1986
Cabinet Sub-Committee (CSC)	Appointed on 3 June 1987, submitted its report on 22 June 1989
National Pay Commission III (NPC-III)	Appointed in August 1989, report submitted in 1990
Administrative Reorganisation Committee (ARC)	Appointed in August 1993, report of the Committee submitted in August 1996
National Pay Commission IV (NPC-IV)	Appointed in August 1996
Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)	Appointed in December 1996

Source: Khan, 1993; Khan, 1994; Khan, 1997; and Khan, 2012.

Table 2.2: Scope and Focus of Committees and Commissions appointed by Governments for Reforming the Civil Service, 1971-1996

Scope	Focus	Committee/Commission
BROAD	Pay in the Civil Service	National Pay Commission-I (NPC-I)
	Micro-restructuring within the civil Service	Martial Law Committee for examining organisational set-up of Ministries/ Divisions, Departments, Directorates and other organisations under them-I (MLC-I)
	Entire Civil Service Local Governance	Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (ASRC)
	Entire Civil Service pay in the Civil Service Local Governance	Pay and Services Commission (P&SC) Committee for Administrative Reorganisation/Reform (CARR)
	Entire Civil Service Local Governance	Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)
MID-RANGE	Micro-Restructuring within the Civil Service	Martial Law Committee for Examining Organisational Set-Up of Public Statutory Corporations (Autonomous, Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Allied Organisations)-II (MLC-II)
	Pay in the Civil Service	National Pay Commission-II (NPC-II)
	Pay in the Civil Service	National Pay Commission-III (NPC-III)
	Pay in the Civil Service	National Pay Commission-IV (NPC-IV)
	Micro-Restructuring within the Civil Service	Administrative Reorganisation Committee (ARC)
	Restoration of Civil Administration at Different Levels	Civil Administration Restoration Committee (CARC)
NARROW	Recruitment and Promotion in the Civil Service	Committee for Examination of Irregularities in Appointment and Promotion of Officers and Staff in the Government (CEI)
	Promotion of Cadre Civil Servants	Secretaries Committee on Administrative Development (SCAD)
	Senior Services Pool	Special Committee to Review
	Senior Services Pool and Promotion of Cadre Civil Servants	the Structure of the Senior Services Pool (SC) Cabinet Sub-Committee (CSC)

Source: Same as Table 2.1.

Table 2.3: Nature of Membership of Committees and Commissions appointed by Governments to reform the Civil Service, 1971-1996.

Membership	Committees/Commissions	Composition
Representative	Administrative and Services Reorganisation Committee (ASRC)	Led by an academic members included a parliamentarian, a civil servant and an academic
	National Pay Commission-II (NPC-II)	Headed by a judge, members included individuals from civil service, academic and private sector
Civil Servants-Dominated	National Pay Commission-I (NPC-I)	Chaired by a civil servant, all members excepting one belonged to the civil service
	Pay and Services Commission	Chairman and all members excepting one belonged to the civil service
	Secretaries Committee on Administrative Development (SCAD)	Monopolised by civil servants
	Administrative Reorganisation Committee (ARC)	Chairman and all members belonged to the civil service
	National Pay Commission-II (NPC-II)	Chairman and two full-time members were retired civil servants
	Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)	Headed by a senior retired civil servant and majority members included retired and serving civil servants
Military Officials Dominated	Martial Law Committee for Examining Organisational Set Up of Ministries/Divisions, Departments, Directorates Under Them (MLC-I)	Chairman and all other members excepting one were senior officers of the army
	Martial Law Committee for Examining Organisational Set Up of Public Statutory Corporations (Autonomous/Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Allied Organisations-II) (MLC-II)	Chairman and all members excepting two were senior army officers
Civil Service-Military	Special Committee for Administrative Reorganisation-Reform (CARR)	Headed by the Chief of Navy and membership included four senior civil servants, a senior civil servant-turned minister, a senior army officer and an academic
	Committee for Examination of Irregularities in Appointment and Promotion of Officers and Staff in the Government (CEI)	Headed by a senior civil servant and other members included one senior army officer and three senior civil servants
	National Pay Commission-III (NPC-III)	Chaired by a senior civil servant and membership included three senior civil servants and one senior army officer
Politician-Dominated	Cabinet Sub-Committee (CSC)	All three members including (CSC) chairman were senior ministers

Source: Same as Table 2.1.

CHAPTER 3

Administrative Reform Initiatives of Governments in Bangladesh (2007-2011)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The present chapter contains description and analysis of administrative reform efforts between 2007 and 2011. Though in terms of time span the period covered below may appear to be rather short but in terms of those who were in charge during the first two years and those who succeeded them is significant in terms of the governance of the country as well as the reform efforts attempted. Between early January 2007 and early 2009 an unelected military- backed government was in power. On three previous occasions civilian caretaker governments were given mandate to organise free and fair parliamentary elections. The tenure of each such government was three months. But in early 2007 in the midst of bitter disagreement among two major political parties Awami League and Bangladesh Nationalist Party as to who would head the next caretaker government the military decided to step in and forced President Iajuddin Ahmed to appoint a former senior retired bureaucrat and Vice President of the World Bank as head of the caretaker government. The caretaker government stayed for two years in office citing the doctrine of necessity. Fakhruddin-led caretaker government set about its task to reform various sectors of the society including bureaucracy. The caretaker government proved its competence by organising free and fair parliamentary elections. Awami League-led Grand Alliance secured a massive victory over Bangladesh Nationalist

Party led four-party alliance. Awami League and its allies won absolute majority by capturing 262 seats out of 300 seats in the national assembly. The BNP and its allies, on the other hand, fared poorly in the elections and could get only 34 seats in the assembly. Only four independent candidates won the electoral battle.

3.2 REFORM INITIATIVES BY LAST CARETAKER GOVERNMENT (2007-2009)

After assuming office in January, 2007, following the declaration of a state of emergency, Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed government embarked on an ambitious plan to infuse dynamism into the administration and ensure its accountability and transparency. In the first meeting with the Secretaries in January 2007, Dr. Ahmed had warned the top bureaucrats that punitive action would be taken against those responsible for the administration's inertia. He said that action would be taken on the basis of official enquiry against officials who would not discharge their duties honestly, sincerely and impartially. The Chief Adviser at that time had stressed the need for taking effective steps to ensure transparency and accountability in the activities of different ministries and agencies under their authority (*The New Age*, 2008). The then Chief Adviser Dr. Fakhruddin asked the top civil servants to make public administration more dynamic, transparent, accountable and pro-people through necessary upgrading to deliver government services to the people. He also asked for constituting a Committee headed by the Establishment Secretary to determine what to do to ensure transparency of the public administration. The Chief Adviser gave the direction in a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Public Administration Reform and Good Governance at his office, which observed that reform in the public administration should be continuing. The meeting, chaired by the Chief Adviser, elaborately discussed and gave approval in principle to implementation of some interim recommendations of the ATM Shamsul Haq Commission, known as Public Administrative Reform Commission (PARC) (*The Daily Star*, 2007). But the interim government seemed to have backtracked on its ambitious plan for reforming the civil administration for infusing 'dynamism, transparency and accountability' in the bureaucracy (NFB, 2008).

Monitoring Committee

Presided over by the Chief Adviser, Dr. Ahmed, the meeting formed a three-member Committee led by the Additional Secretary to the Cabinet

Division, Zahid Hossain, to monitor functions of different ministries and divisions at the secretariat. The Monitoring Committee had been asked to see whether the ministries and divisions were running in keeping with the rules of business and the allocations of business. The Chief Adviser directed the officials to go by the rules in discharging their responsibilities. He expressed annoyance that the officials were not abiding by the secretariat instructions and also not discharging duties with responsibility unnecessarily delaying the process.

Cabinet Committee on Administrative Reforms and Good Governance

The Cabinet Committee on Administrative Reforms and Good Governance was formed in July, 2007 and reconstituted on February 12, 2008 after resignation of four Advisers in January. Its new members were Dr. AMM Shawkat Ali, Finance Adviser Dr. Mirza Azizul Islam, Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman and Women and Children Affairs Adviser Rasheda K. Choudhury. The Committee was to come up with specific directives for reforms and guidelines for postings and transfers in the central and field-level administration. It was also supposed to give directives for career planning and improving performance of public servants (*The Daily Star*, 2009).

Human Resources Management Sub-Committee of the Establishment Ministry

The Human Resources Management Sub-Committee of the Establishment Ministry formed at the end of year 2007 for drafting a civil service ordinance and policies for promotion, transfer, career planning and strengthening field administration. In December, 2007, the Sub-Committee of Establishment Ministry drafted a civil service ordinance and policies for promotion, transfer and career planning for public servants and strengthening the field administration. Besides suggesting performance-based postings and promotion, the draft has proposed formation of a “civil service authority” to act as the guardian of the public servants with an aim to cut political influence on the administration. The major recommendations of Sub-Committee were:

1. Civil Service Authority

To stop political influence on the public servants, it suggested forming a five-member Civil Service Authority. The process for appointing members of the Civil Service Authority would be like that of the judges

of the Supreme Court. The members would have 25-year job experience and be free from all political linkages. The Civil Service Authority would also listen to the grievances of government employees who at present go to the Prime Minister's Office, which creates scope for political influence on the administration. The draft suggested that the government would seek opinion of the Civil Service Authority before bringing any change to any policy. It would ensure a check and balance in the administration.

2. Merit Based Promotion and Posting

The annual confidential report should focus more on performance, the subcommittee said. It suggested that postings and promotion be based on merit. Disregard for merit and performance over the years has disheartened many civil servants. The subcommittee suggested a provision for voluntary retirement after completion of 15 years in job instead of the present 25 years. Besides, the subcommittee suggested removing the provision of forced retirement. The government could award any other punishment instead of forced retirement.

3. Legal Support

The subcommittee also recommended providing legal support to public servants if one faced legal proceedings for any action done in good faith while discharging government duties. The career planning policy suggested need-based training throughout a government employee's career.

3.3 REGULATORY REFORMS COMMISSION (RRC)

The Caretaker Government took some laudable steps to identify and try to address over-regulation of the economy. A high-powered Regulatory Reform Commission (RRC) was formed in October 30, 2007. The RRC had composed of seventeen members. With tenure of one year, the Commission was chaired by former Adviser to the Caretaker Government and Cabinet Secretary Dr. Akbar Ali Khan and members included former Caretaker Government Adviser Syed Manjur-e-Elahi, former Secretary Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, FBCCI President, two prominent economists and government Secretaries and executives concerned. The notification stated the Board of Investment (BOI) would serve as the secretariat for the RRC, while the BOI executive Chairman would serve as the member-secretary of the Commission. The other members

of the RRC were: the Cabinet Secretary, Bangladesh Bank Governor, Secretaries to the Finance Division, Establishment, Home, Law Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Commerce, Environment and Forest Ministries, the NBR Chairman, economist Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Executive Director, Dr. Mustafizur Rahman and Chairman of Marc Group MA Rouf Chowdhury (bd.news24.com, 2007).

The government appointed Golam Robbani, a joint secretary, as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Regulatory Reform Commission. In addition, five deputy secretaries were transferred to the Commission secretariat, housed at the Board of Investment, to assist the Commission members assigned to modernise the country's age-old trade and business regulations (*The Financial Express*, 2007).

A government notification indicated the urgency of forming the Reform Commission. It said "in the present era of globalisation and regional cooperation the huge numbers of existing rules of the country are not suitable for a dynamic administration" (UNB, 2007). In Bangladesh, there are more than 10,000 regulations (acts, rules, bylaws, circulars, resolutions etc.) to administer the country, but most of those regulations are hundred years' old and inoperative. They also do not match with the needs of the people under the present conditions (Alberuni and Raihan, 2009). Since the establishment; it has made a number of recommendations for reforms (*The Daily Star*, 2009).

Mission

- a. to identify rules, regulations and government orders that are currently being used in Bangladesh for carrying out government's administrative tasks;
- b. to identify unnecessary/irrelevant rules, regulations and government orders, recommendation to repeal these;
- c. to identify while analysing the necessary rules, regulations and government orders, identify those that create complications and prolong processing time;
- d. to recommend simplification and doing away with lengthy processes with regard to existing rules, regulations and government orders;
- e. to recommend reform of rules, regulations and government orders in order to ensure maximum support and right for the people of a democratic state;

- f. to make suggestions to modernise the rules, regulations and government orders in order to establish a modern and progressive administration that is suitable with the democratic system of the country;
- g. to recommend formulation of new rules, regulations and government orders if necessary;
- h. to make new reforms regulations and government orders regarding investment and business sector by taking into cognisance globalisation, regional support and national economic progress;
- i. to make recommendations to the government on priority basis depending on urgency of the issue at hand; (Rahman, 2009:2)
- j. to update the centuries-old rules and regulations of the country to infuse dynamism into governance, administration and the economy; (*The Financial Express*, 2007) and
- k. to remove bottlenecks for investment, commerce and trade (*The Daily Star*, 2008).

Diagnosis

The Regulatory Reforms Commission (RRC) created by an executive order in 2007 with an extended life till 29 October 2010 has submitted its first report to the government in February 2009. The commission on October 21, 2009 received a letter from the Chief Adviser's Office which says its tenure has been extended by two years. Dr. Akbar Ali Khan resigned from the post of RRC chairman on October 15, 2009 alleging that he was not getting government's cooperation. About making the RRC dysfunctional, he said the government is either not serious about reform or it thinks that other organisations including parliamentary standing committees can play a role in reform (*The Financial Express*, 2009).

Activities and Experiences of RRC

"Bangladesh is neither over-regulated nor under-regulated—she is rather ill regulated", Chair, RRC, Bangladesh. For recommending/suggesting policy options and guidelines to the government, the RRC constituted six committees focusing on specific issues. These were identified based on urgency of the tasks at hand and perspectives of the RRC members.

Six Committees Constituted by the RRC

1. Duty Exemption and Duty Drawback System, Capital Machinery and Import Clearance and Bonded Warehouse Licensing Committee;
2. Location and Environment Clearance Certificates Committee;
3. Processing and Approval of Foreign Private Loans Committee;
4. Foreign Exchange Regulations Act 1947 Committee;
5. Customer Services of the Utility Services Committee;
6. Land Management and Registration Taskforce (Rahman, 2009).

Three Program Areas

1. Better Business Regulations: Reducing doing business costs while meeting societal expectations.
2. Enhanced Economic Zones: New zones regime based on international best practices with private sector participation.
3. Capacity Building: Strengthening GoB agencies, civil servants, and other key stakeholders of PSD.

Activities of RRC

RRC had met eleven times:

- RRC selected 174 laws as relevant to business and published them in their first report;
- 5000 SRO (cumulative) scanned from BG press archive;
- RRC compiled 60% of rules and regulations for the selected 174 laws.

Recommendations

The RRC identified 202 laws to study the rules and regulations under those and sent 49 recommendations to the government from its nine meetings (*The Daily Star*, 2008). The RRC, among others, recommended for the establishment of a mandatory legal structure for making Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). It is a widely accepted tool to improve the efficiency, transparency and accountability of regulatory decision-making (*The Daily Star*, 2009).

Implementation Status RRC Recommendations

The Commission's chief said it had placed 153 pledges to the government of which 46 or 34 per cent have been fully implemented. Nine or 7 per cent were partially implemented, and 52 or 38 per cent are under implementation. Some 20 or 15 per cent recommendations await implementation and rest 8 or 6 per cent have not waved at all. The Commission on its own has published a 131-page book titled *Regulatory Reform Commission 1st Report, February 2009* compiling these recommendations and their implementation status.

3.4 SEVENTH NATIONAL PAY COMMISSION (NPC-VII)

The Seventh National Pay Commission (NPC-VII) was formed by the Caretaker Government in October, 2008 Under the Chairmanship of Mir Mustafizur Rahman, and former Finance Secretary, to recommend pay structure for the employees of government, semi-government and autonomous organisations.

Recommendations

The Pay Commission Chairman Mostafizur Rahman handed over the report to Finance Minister AMA Muhith on April 23, 2009 proposing new pay scales for civil servants raising the maximum salary Tk. 42,000 from Tk. 23,000 and minimum to Tk. 4,000 from Tk. 2,300 (Table 3.1 and 3.2). The Pay Commission recommended forming a cell to adjust the salary structure every year with the inflation rate in the country. The Commission also recommended that the government give education allowances for the children of the government employees. The Chairman said the Commission considered that the government employees and officers would pay their individual income tax and also recommended education allowance for the first time in the country.

Diagnosis

Talking to reporters following submission of the 7th Pay Commission report at the ministry, Finance Minister Muhith underlined the limitations of national exchequer in implementing the recommendations. "I would have been very happy if the recommendations could be implemented. But this is not the year (to implement it)," he said replying to a question, indicating the government's limitations amid global recession (Kader, 2009). The government formed a seven-member inter-ministerial

Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary M Abdul Aziz to review the proposals of the NPC and come up with its recommendations. The Cabinet reportedly accepted the recommendations of this committee. Records show that no government in the past accepted the pay structures proposed by NPC(s); rather inter-ministerial committees' recommendations on pay structures were accepted and implemented (Mondal, 2009). In the pay scale recommended by the first National Pay Commission, the ratio between the highest and the lowest scale was 1:16. In the newly introduced scale this ratio is 1:10 as it was in the previous one, where the highest scale was Tk. 23,000 (fixed) and the lowest scale was Tk. 2,400, while in the new seventh pay scale the highest and the lowest are Tk. 40,000 and Tk. 4,100 respectively. To establish an egalitarian democratic society and to ensure social justice by reducing discrimination between the highest and the lowest scale holders, this ratio should be decreased as far as possible. In Canada for example this ratio is 1:6. The mid-level officers and employees belonging to scales between 10 and 17 would be less benefited compared with officials in scales 1-4. (Mozumder and Mashreque, 2009).

Outcome

The Pay Commission recommended fixing of the highest basic pay at Tk. 45,000 and the lowest at Tk. 4,000. The proposed basic at the highest level was reduced to, Tk. 40,000 and the lowest basic was increased to Tk. 4,100. Besides, the government had also significantly raised the financial benefits for the pensioners. The monthly benefit had been enhanced by 40 per cent for pension holders aged below 65, while the hike would be 50 per cent for those above 65 years. The government for the first time has introduced pension benefit for the spouses of the deceased women government servants. Besides, the government had introduced a new 'education assistance allowance' for government officials and employees, the maximum amount will be Tk. 300, while the minimum Tk. 200 per month. The enhanced salary would also be applicable for teachers under MPO. In the seventh pay scale; the government had increased the allowances for police personnel by 30 per cent. Under the new pay scale, the health allowances have been increased to Tk. 700 for the government servants, while other allowances by 30 per cent. Gender discrimination over pension has also been resolved. Earlier, only wives of deceased public servants would get pensions, not the husbands. Medical allowance has been increased to

Tk. 2,000 from Tk. 500. The judiciary would get a separate pay scale, with district judges under the Judicial Service Commission receiving a maximum salary in line with Grade-3 of the new scale. They would also get a special clothing allowance. They would be provided the special allowance considering their responsibility, which is 30 per cent of their salaries every five years. There would be a separate scale for all teachers in future. Citing difference of salaries for nurses with and without diploma, their scale would be determined according to qualifications.

3.5 CIVIL SERVICE ACT

The last Caretaker government took an initiative to enact a law for administrative reform. After assuming office, the present government asked the Establishment Ministry to go forward with that initiative (*The Daily Star*, 2011). The Committee was formed under direct supervision of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who asked it to submit the draft to her. The Drafting Committee also includes the Secretary to the Prime Minister's Office, Home Secretary, Establishment Secretary, and the Secretary to the Drafting and Legislative Division of the Law Ministry. The Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary has prepared the draft law considering the existing laws and regulations guiding the civil service in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The Ministry of Establishment prepared the draft of the Civil Service Act, 2010, and it was reviewed by a committee headed by Cabinet Secretary M Abdul Aziz. The senior civil servants believed that the proposed Act would make the functioning of the civil service systematic.

On Thursday 31 March, 2011, the first ever draft of the Civil Service Act had been published on the websites of the Cabinet Division and the Ministry of Establishment (UNDP, 2011). The Ministry urged civil society members, academics and professionals to send their opinion to csaopinion@moestb.gov.bd or the Deputy Secretary of the Establishment Ministry by April 30 (*The Daily Star*, 2011). The Act could make the administration more competent, people-oriented and dynamic (*The Financial Express*, 2011).

The Draft Law suggested some changes in the existing system. These include:

- a. no civil servant would be forced into retirement as punishment without adequate departmental proceedings including an opportunity of self-defense (*The Daily Star*, 2011);

- b. all cadres in Bangladesh Civil Service will be deemed civil servants, who are Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Secretaries, the Principal Secretary and the Cabinet Secretary of the government, and all Class-I and II gazetted officers;
- c. performance reports, commonly known as Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs), would not remain confidential, and the Officers Reported Upon (ORU) would have access to their ACRs;
- d. to cut down the cost of running the administration, class III and class IV posts might be abolished and their jobs outsourced (Mondal, 2010);
- e. there would be an option for the government to force a civil servant into retirement if he or she fails to pass a promotion examination four times. The officials would be allowed to go into voluntary retirement, after their third failure to pass a promotion exam;
- f. a civil servant's regular retirement age would be 60 instead of the current age limit of 57, a demand the bureaucrats had been making for a long time;
- g. a civil servant would be allowed to go into voluntary retirement after 20 years in service instead of the present 25 years;
- h. merit, experience and training would be the criteria for promotions and postings;
- i. no civil service officer would be allowed to exercise powers in matters of interest of their close relatives or their organisations;
- j. the Public Servants (Retirement) Act, 1974, will not be applicable for civil servants from the day the new law will be enacted;
- k. the act would create an opportunity for competent officers to leave the government service and take lucrative jobs in the UN and other international organisations;
- l. thirteen general principles would be followed by the civil servants while discharging their duties: (i) legal assurance, (ii) equality, (iii) neutrality, (iv) precision and remaining error-free, (v) not to surpass the jurisdiction and not to do anything beyond their jurisdiction, (vi) consideration, (vii) efficiency, (viii) accountability, (ix) transparency, (x) professionalism, (xi) public interest, (xii) enhancement of knowledge and decision-

- making based on social needs, and (xiii) lawful execution of functions (Quddusi, 2011).
- m. eighty per cent posts of the lowest grade in senior level would be filled up through direct appointment while the rest 20 per cent be filled up through promotion from junior-level cadres (banglanews24.com, 2011); and
 - n. the draft classifies civil service into 12 grades under three layers—the superior layer, the senior layer, and junior layer. (*The News Today*, 2011).

The draft law says that the Establishment Ministry would control and manage the proposed civil service. At present, recruitment of persons at the entry level of different cadres through the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) is the responsibility of the Establishment Ministry. After recruitment, the control and management of different cadres of the BCS rests with the ministries concerned. Only the BCS (Administration) cadre is directly controlled and administered by the establishment ministry. So, a decentralised approach towards managing the affairs of the proposed civil service needs to be found (Mondal, 2011).

3.6 PERFORMANCE BASED EVALUATION SYSTEM (PBES)

It is a belief among former and incumbent senior bureaucrats that the practice of Annual Confidential Reports (ACR), for promotion of civil servants, fosters partisan favouritism within the administration because of the confidentiality of the process (*The Daily Star*, 2010: 1). Performance Based Evaluation System (PBES), an objective system, has been undertaken to replace the current ACR (Annual Confidential Report) system. The introduction of the performance based evaluation system (PBES) is expected to bring positive and productive changes in the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS). The present Annual Confidential Report (ACR) system as an outdated one and the PBES is to ensure good governance and effective civil service. The hierarchies and designations of the BCS cadres differ from organisation to organisation and execution of the single ACR system is not appropriate for all of them. However, the PBES can be applied for all the officers ranging from Assistant Secretary to Secretary. The PBES would provide a reliable basis for evaluating each individual's contribution in achieving the organisational goals and implementing the government policies. It would correctly measure the efficiency and capability of an officer and put the right

man in the right position. The PBES would change the scenario of BCS, and make it more dynamic and effective to meet the challenges of the new millennium (*The Financial Express*, 2010).

The Prime Minister of Bangladesh said that Performance Based Evaluation System (PBES) would also be followed for promotion, transfer and posting of all government officials. Urging the Secretaries to achieve cent per cent implementation of Annual Development Program (ADP) in the new fiscal year, the Prime Minister ordered introduction of Performance Based Evaluation System (PBES) for promotion and posting of the government officials (UNB, BSS).

3.7 FROM MINISTRY OF ESTABLISHMENT TO MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The Establishment Ministry used to work as a general administrative branch of the Home Ministry before 1962. This branch had got the status of 'service and general administration office' in 1962. After the independence of the country, it worked as Establishment Department from 1972 to 1975. The Department was upgraded to Establishment Ministry following recommendations of the 'Enam Committee' in 1982. It was a longstanding demand of the public administration officials to change the name of the Ministry as "confusion looms over about its function at home and abroad". There was some wording problem in the name of the Ministry. So, it was renamed Ministry of Public Administration for its public welfare-oriented work. The Establishment Ministry has been renamed the Ministry of Public Administration with an extended scope of work through redefining its function on 25th April, 2011 (banglanews24.com, 2011).

The name "Establishment Ministry" does not reflect the work it does and should be renamed with a meaningful one. A proposal suggesting three prospective names of the Ministry—Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Ministry of Personnel Management. The meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is likely to opt for "Ministry of Public Administration" (Tusher, 2011). In fact, On April 25, 2011, the Cabinet approved the renaming of the Ministry to remove 'confusion at home and abroad'. Finally, in May 02, 2011, the government renamed the Establishment Ministry as the Ministry of Public Administration (*The Independent*, 2011).

Why it was Renamed?

- the present name does not conform to the ministry's activities;
- the current name is confusing to many, especially to foreigners (*The Daily Star*, 2010); and
- meet the demand of public administration officials.

3.8 REFORM INITIATIVES UNDER CONSIDERATION

In FY 2010-11, following important activities/ programs/ projects were scheduled to be implemented:

- a. creating a database to ensure the posting of officers based on their skill, aptitude, capability and training;
- b. motivating the officers of the civil service to acquire knowledge and skill by providing financial incentive for higher degree;
- c. expansion and modernisation of the existing computer system and training facilities of the Ministry of Establishment;
- d. strengthening e-governance in the Ministry of Establishment and suggesting the other ministries for doing the same;
- e. purchase of cars/ vehicles for the officers entitled to official transport and also for the District and Upazila Administrations;
- f. providing training to mid and senior level officers at home and abroad on management and skill development under "Managing at the Top-2 (MATT-2): Bangladesh Public Service Capacity Building Program";
- g. introducing Performance Based Evaluation System (PBES) on a pilot basis in Ministry of Establishment;
- h. introducing digital file tracking system on a pilot basis;
- i. taking initiative to fill the vacant posts of different Ministries/ Divisions;
- j. formulating Civil Service Act;
- k. formulating career planning, promotion policies, transfer and placement policies;
- l. arranging programs for ensuring service delivery, quality education and corruption free environment;
- m. Setting Vision, Mission, Values and reframing the role of the Ministry of Establishment and its name;
- n. taking necessary steps to establish clustering of the Ministries;

- o. ensuring proper training for the civil servants consistent with the demand of time; and
- p. formulating National Training Policy and carrying out Field Administration reforms (MTBF, 2010-2011).

3.9 CONCLUSION

Reform initiatives, during 2007-2011, to modernize the administration were quite a few to be noted. The military backed caretaker government tried to put emphasis on the recommendations made by PARC in bringing changes in both central and field administration. Modernization of public service delivery along with a noteworthy stress for participative essence in the process of administration and decision making were the hallmarks of the reform initiatives of both the regimes. Continuation of the efforts, initiated by caretaker government, has been observed in the first three years of elected government led by Awami League. During the period of 2007-2011 both caretaker government and Awami League led elected government have put significant focus on the issue of salary and allowances of civil servants. Salary and allowances of civil servants have been increased significantly during these years. Although recommendations made by most of the committees and commissions in this phase rigorously proposed a performance based pay and career management but none of them have been implemented with full effect yet. Attempt to reduce gender discrimination in pension scheme has been one of the major positive changes in the administration in recent times. Initiatives to produce a civil service act were appreciated by many but still frustration and uncertainty prevail among the administration as it has not been finalized yet to give a proper shape and destination to the civil service management. Not surprisingly, most of the recommendations have not got the desired illumination because resistance is still quite strong enough to impede the implementation of those recommendations and policy changes. Strong political commitment along with eagerness of bureaucrats to get modernize have been absent in the politico-administrative scenario of Bangladesh during the period under consideration in this chapter. A convergence between political commitment and eagerness of bureaucrats is necessary to remove the current and potential obstacles towards implementation of the recommendations. Reform initiatives and recommendations triggered by both the regimes need to be implemented as those are significant for having a modernized, accountable and transparent administration.

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*Annex***Table 3.1: Pay Scale Recommended by NPC- VII**

Grade(s)	Initial Pay 2005	Initial Pay Recommended by 7th NPC	Initial Pay Approved by Government
I	Tk. 23,000 (fixed)	Tk. 45,000 (fixed)	Tk. 40,000 (fixed)
II	Tk. 19,300	Tk. 37,750	Tk. 33,500
III	Tk. 16,800	Tk. 32,600	Tk. 29,000
IV	Tk. 15,00	Tk. 28,850	Tk. 25,750
V	Tk. 13,750	Tk. 26,230	Tk. 22,250
VI	Tk. 11,000	Tk. 20,800	Tk. 18,500
VII	Tk. 9,000	Tk. 16,900	Tk. 15,000
VIII	Tk. 7,400	Tk. 13,750	Tk. 12,000
IX	Tk. 6,800	Tk. 12,900	Tk. 11,000
X	Tk. 5,100	Tk. 9,300	Tk. 8,000
XI	Tk. 4,100	Tk. 7,000	Tk. 6,400
XII	Tk. 3,700	Tk. 6,400	Tk. 5,900
XIII	Tk. 3,500	Tk. 6,000	Tk. 5,500
XIV	Tk. 3,300	Tk. 5,600	Tk. 5,200
XV	Tk. 3,100	Tk. 5,300	Tk. 4,900
XVI	Tk. 3,000	Tk. 5,000	Tk. 4,700
XVII	Tk. 2,850	Tk. 4,700	Tk. 4,500
XVIII	Tk. 2,600	Tk. 4,400	Tk. 4,400
XIX	Tk. 2,500	Tk. 4,200	Tk. 4,250
XX	Tk. 2,400	Tk. 4,000	Tk. 4,100

Table 3.2: Comparison between NPC-VII Recommendations and Previous Pay Scale

Salary Hike in New Pay Scale

Previous Pay Scale	New Pay Scale	Rate of Increase
23000/-	40000/- (fixed)	74%
19300/-	33500/-	74%
16800/-	29000/-	73%
15000/-	25750/-	72%
13750/-	22250/-	62%
11000/-	18500/-	68%
9000/-	15000/-	67%
7400/-	12000/-	62%
6800/-	11000/-	62%
5100/-	8000/-	56.5%
4100/-	6400/-	56%
3700/-	5900/-	59%
3500/-	5500/-	57%
3300/-	5200/-	57.5%
3100/-	4900/-	58%
3000/-	4700/-	56.5%
2850/-	4500/-	58%
2600/-	4400/-	69%
2500/-	4250/-	70%
2400/-	4100/-	71%

(Figures in Taka)

CHAPTER 4

Major Administrative Reforms and Role of International Donors in Bangladesh

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research studies (Sobhan, 1982; Sobhan and Bhattacharya, 1990) have shown the nature and extent of influence of international donors in the economy of Bangladesh. International donors provide economic and technical assistance (TA) which together constitute foreign development aid to this country. It is through this foreign aid that the international donors significantly influence the public policy making process in Bangladesh. Technical Assistance (TA) is the key component of foreign aid. The TA usually takes three forms (Gant, 1979:287). These are: (a) expert personnel to fill the gaps in host country's complement of trained manpower; (b) training of such staff to make up the deficiency; and (c) institution building to create the agency and system capacity of a country to meet its requirements for technology, expertise and specialised personnel. The focus of this chapter is on the role of four international donors in the area of civil service reform in Bangladesh. Of the four donors, three, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided research and advisory services, training facilities

and supplied equipment and all these are considered objectives of TA programs while the involvement of the fourth one, i.e. the Overseas Development Authority (ODA) has not been as extensive as the other three. More specifically, the present chapter examines the recommendations of donor-sponsored bodies and analyses responses of successive governments to donor-driven reform initiatives.

4.2 ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL DONORS IN ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

The involvement of international donors in reforming the civil service system in Bangladesh began in late 1970s. All four international donors, the IBRD, the UNDP, the USAID and the ODA of UK have invested together considerable resources to bring about efficiency, productivity, effectiveness and accountability in the civil service.

4.2.1 Training Needs Survey (TNS)

In 1979, IBRD hired a political scientist of Bangladeshi origin settled in USA to conduct a training needs survey of three major public sector training institutions. The expatriate consult with the assistance of a Bangladeshi public administration specialist studied the functions of three erstwhile training institutes, i.e. Bangladesh Administrative Staff College (BASC), National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) and Civil Officer's Training Academy (COTA) to assess the training needs of class I gazetted officers vis-à-vis the capabilities of the institutions. The Training Needs Survey (TNS) was intended to be a preamble to the government's preparation of a training plan and formulation of a training policy. After seventeen years of the submission of the short-term consultancy report the government has neither the training plan nor an official training policy. This is strange because the Zia government as early as 20 January 1981 established a National Training Council (NTC). One of the major responsibilities of the NTC was to formulate a National Training Policy (NTP) and review it from time to time in terms of felt needs and changed priorities (Khan, 1984). A document titled Training Policy for Government Officials was prepared in draft form single-handedly by the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Establishment (MOE) without consulting other members of the NTC (Khan, 1986). But this document never received formal approval by the government of the day and the situation has not changed since then.

4.2.2 Pre-Investment Study for a Public Administration Training and Management Improvement Project (PATMIP) in Bangladesh

The UNDP's involvement in civil service reform began in 1980 with financing of the Pre-Investment Study for a Public Administration Training and Management Improvement Project (PATMIP) in Bangladesh. The Study was managed and supervised by the IBRD and conducted by the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) of New York, USA. The Study's cost amounted to US \$250,000. The Study was carried out by a team of expatriate consultants. They were aided by some local consultants. The Study Team worked for almost four months in two phases between November and December 1980 and January and April 1981 and produced two reports, i.e. an inception report and a final report.

The Study's main responsibility was to prepare a project for possible IDA financing. The proposed project was to: (a) improve public administration through Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and Staff Training Institute (STI); (b) strengthen management functions, standards and procedures used by the Organisation and Management (O&M) Wing of the Ministry of Establishment (MOE); (c) strengthen the Training and Career Planning Wing (TCPW) of MOE; and (d) review personnel management aspect of public administration in Bangladesh (IPA, 1981:11). The Study's observations and recommendations for a technical assistance project focused on three areas: (a) training-management and administrative, (b) personnel management and (c) O&M services. In the area of training, the Study found the following deficiencies: (a) little attention given to training needs of officials at the intermediate and lower levels; (b) missions of the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) and the Bangladesh Administrative Staff College (BASC)—two erstwhile institutes of training for mid-and higher-level civil servants and since then merged into BPATC—lacked definition and clear purpose; (c) lack of rationalisation in the functions and responsibilities of the STI—a training institute that imparted training to non-gazetted staff and now merged with four Regional Public Administration Training Centers (RPATCs); (d) in-house and on-the-job training not been fully utilised; (e) quality of training been generally low; and (f) status and career prospect of staff engaged in training been undesirable (IPA, 1981:6).

Accordingly, the Study recommended (a) redressing the training needs of public officials working at intermediate and lower levels;

(b) purposes of NIPA and BASC needed to be studied and redefined; (c) upgrading of the status of STI and rationalisation of its functions; (d) full and systematic exploitation of in-house and on-the-job training capacities; (e) establishment of a new Training Wing in MOE and small Training Cells (TCs) in all major ministries to encourage and foster greater departmental involvement in training programs; and (f) setting up of a Training of Trainer's (TOT) Institute within BPATC to enhance quality of training instruction (IPA, 1981:6-7). In the area of personnel management, a seven-point action plan was recommended. These included: (a) establishment of a Central Personnel Office (CPO) for developing, coordinating and administering government-wide policies; (b) preparation of a Government Personnel Manual for codification of personnel policies, rules and procedures as a basis for operation of a decentralised personnel management system administered through personnel officers in respective ministries; (c) establishment of a government-wide job analysis program; (d) setting up of a system of performance evaluation; (e) development of an open system of career advancement; (f) creation of a manpower planning system; and (g) development of a comprehensive personnel record system (IPA, 1981:7-8). In the area of O&M, the Study focused attention to major weakness in the organisational structure of the civil service system in Bangladesh—the physical and organisational separation of policy making, i.e. ministries located in the secretariat and execution of such policies, i.e. in attached departments (IPA, 1981:8). The recommendations of the Study in the O&M area included: establishment of a Central Management Services Division (CMSD) within MOE as a centre of initiative and innovation in all matters pertaining to managerial and administrative efficiency (IPA, 1981:9). One of the major outcomes of the Study was the merger of BASC, NIPA and COTA and their co-location in Savar within the framework of BPATC and upgradation of the status of STI and placing its functions and responsibilities to four RPACs. Also a Training Wing within MOE was created and placed under the jurisdiction of the Additional Secretary. An Establishment Manual in two volumes was prepared in 1988 by the O & M Wing of the MOE but not in the way the Study recommended. But the volumes are in any case now dated.

But the most of important recommendations were not implemented by the government. These included: (a) establishing a Central Personnel Office (CPO), a government-wide job analysis program, a system of performance evaluation; (b) creation of a manpower planning system;

(c) development of a comprehensive personnel record system; (d) setting up of a TOT institute and TCs in large ministries; (e) establishment of Central Management Services Division (CMSD); and (f) development of an open system of career advancement.

4.2.3 Public Administration Project (PAP)

Public Administration (Training, Personnel and Management) Project (PAP) funded by the World Bank lasted seven years, i. e. 1983-1990 and its cost amounted to US \$ 14.71 million. The PAP was designed to enhance efficiency in the civil service through improved and expanded training, upgraded personnel management and better organisation and management (O&M). The Project was the outcome of IBRD's continuous effort to upgrade public service system in Bangladesh. The IBRD set a number of conditions before offering to finance the Project. First, it wanted the government to prepare a broad-based training plan for civil service along with a detailed statement about the training policy. Second, it asked for the delineation in the clear-cut manner the role of existing training institutions in the public sector. Third, it envisaged undertaking of investigation about the need for and the means and costs of improving public administration training and management standards and procedures. The government did not prepare a training plan. The training policy was not formulated as indicated earlier. But the government clarified the role of the training institutions. The government also agreed to undertake a diagnostic study, i.e. PATMIP, discussed in the earlier section. The major focus of the Project was to enhance the capacity of the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and the Ministry of Establishment (MOE) (Staff Appraisal Report, 1983:16). In the case of BPATC the capacity enhancement would include such measures as: (a) increasing its enrolment capacity; and (b) upgrading its quality of training. Strengthening of MOE would be done by: (a) developing and instituting a modernised Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) and (b) establishing a Management Services Wing (MSW). The Project was to assist the government to: (a) expand the physical capacity of the BPATC through construction and equipping of teaching facilities, library, administrative buildings and a dormitory; (b) improve the quality of training at BPATC through providing fellowships and special training courses to upgrade the teaching staff, increasing the relevance of curricula to training needs with the assistance of experts, developing a program of research and case studies and upgrading

equipment and training material; (c) enhance the present system of personnel administration through the introduction of a modern PMIS with the assistance of experts and reinforced by staff training and additional equipment and salary support for incremental staff; (d) strengthen administrative systems and procedures through the financing of experts, staff training, equipment and incremental salaries to enhance the scope of the O&M Wing at MOE; and (e) upgrade project management capability in the MOE through provision of staff training, equipment and incremental staff salaries for the Project Implementation Wing (PIW) (Staff Appraisal Report, 1983:17). The training objective of the Project was substantially achieved. Buildings were constructed for housing, office and training purposes. A number of trainers were sent abroad to pursue higher studies and training in relevant disciplines and areas. A number of expatriate consultants were hired for curriculum development. But unpredictable political changes, rigid project design and management problems contributed to undue delays in achieving the physical and quality objectives of the training component (The World Bank, 1993:2). In the case of the MOE, the impact of the Project was insignificant. Though both expatriate and local experts worked laboriously for months on the PMIS it was not introduced in the way specified in the project document. The MOE has a computerised information retrieval system. But that is neither comprehensive nor efficient. This is known as the Personnel Data Statement (PDS). The PDS contains information about officials belonging to only one cadre, i.e. the BCS (Administration). Also the capacity of the O&M Wing has not been increased to any significant degree as envisaged in the Project document. Also administrative procedures and systems have not been rationalised. The project management capacity of the MOE remains highly suspect.

It can be said that neither the PMIS nor the MSW objectives nor other planned improvements in the MOE such as strengthening its capacity to offer management services to other departments within were fully achieved because there was insufficient support and commitment, evidenced by constant changes of personnel and internal conflict over project management (The World Bank, 1993:2).

4.2.4 Mobilisation and Management of Public Resources (MMPR) in Bangladesh

An expatriate consultant under UNDP's Management Development Program (MDP) prepared a preliminary report titled Mobilisation and

Management of Public Resources (MMPR) in Bangladesh: A Role for UNDP's MDP. The Report was outcome of the Consultant's seven-week stay in Bangladesh, i.e. from April to June 1989. The discussion which follows is confined to the Report's section on the civil service. Beside the civil service the other contents of the Report included deficiencies in public expenditure planning and budgeting and accounting need for public resource mobilisation and further decentralisation. The Report pointed out a number of deficiencies in the civil service system in Bangladesh. First, no single institution was responsible for civil service reform. Second, existence of fragmentation of authority was clearly noticeable resulting in lack of coordination between different agencies responsible for recruitment, training and promotion of civil servants. Third, civil service policies were not based on adequate research. Fourth, long-term impact of rules and procedures on the functioning of the civil service was not given careful attention. Fifth, training rules and regulations had not been embodied in any coherent policy framework. Sixth, the BPATC's effectiveness as the apex training institution had been seriously undermined due to the simultaneous presence of a number of factors including deterioration in the quality of its instruction; under-utilisation of library and other facilities; serious procurement irregularities; lack of relevant qualifications on the part of the faculty to undertake action-oriented research and consultancy; unhappiness of senior deputationist civil servants with their posting at Savar (location of BPATC outside the capital city) and harbouring a feeling of being dumped; directly-recruited junior faculty not adequately prepared to write case studies on real life situations due to lack of administrative experience at field and headquarters levels (Thomas, 1989:25-27). The major recommendation of the Report was commissioning of a detail survey under the auspices of the MOE for preparation of career development plans for all civil servants and linking that with their training needs (Thomas, 1989: 37). But this recommendation did not receive any attention from concerned government institutions.

4.2.5 Public Administration Efficiency Study (PAES)

The Public Administration Efficiency Study (PAES) was undertaken at the request of the Bangladesh government and funded by the USAID. The Study was conducted by a team of local and expatriate consultants under the leadership of a Bangladeshi public administration scholar of international repute. The duration of the Study was six months, i.e.

from May 1989 to November 1989. The PAES consultant team had to work under the overall guidance and direction of the Steering Committee and direct supervision of four Working Groups. The Steering Committee was chaired by a senior minister and met every month to review the progress of work. Excepting one member beside the chairman the other eight members were all career civil servants. The Working Groups were led by civil servants and all other members of these groups belonged to the civil service. The consultants had to report to their respective working groups every two weeks. The nature of control exercised can be gauged from the fact that the consultants, against their best professional judgement, had to substantially alter and modify their draft reports to make them acceptable to members of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups. The Project Director and the Team Leader of the PAES Study kept the USAID informed of this development. The PAES had two broad objectives: (a) to suggest ways and means to make administration accountable and efficient; and (b) to recommend measures to make administration dynamic (Khan et al., 1989: 1). The scope of the Study included six ministries, i.e., Establishment, Finance, Planning, Agriculture, Commerce, Industries and Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control. The focus of the Study was in four areas: (a) Secretariat System and Work Procedure; (b) Ministry-Department Relationships, (c) Ministry-Corporation Relationships, and (d) Project Cycle Policies and Procedures. Within the above four areas, the study's recommendations related to: (a) higher standards in administrative performance; (b) sound policy analysis; (c) implementation of policy and its strategic implications; (d) delegation of authority for non-policymaking decisions; (e) procedures for staffing selected ministries/divisions; and (f) development and improvement of training facilities for development administration (Khan et al., 1989:6). The five volume report of the PAES contained two hundred and four recommendations to overcome constraints to efficiency in the civil service.

The Study identified five major constraints to efficiency. These were: (a) diluted accountability; (b) over-centralisation; (c) complex operating procedures; (d) weak support systems; and (e) inadequate human resources (Khan et al., 1989:1-3). The significant recommendations of the Study included: (a) strengthening supervision through training and management support, (b) reducing secretariat's operational activities through delegation of routine personnel and financial matters to

departments, corporations and subordinate offices; (c) reducing layers in decision making and encouraging horizontal communication between concerned officers and organisations; (d) enhancing O&M capacity to improve work procedures and organisational effectiveness; (e) modernisation of office equipment; (f) introduction of a two-tier career system to raise quality of the senior civil service; (g) increasing incentives for high performance including wider use of merit as a criteria for promotion; (h) reducing staff rotation by extending posting period to five years in allied functional areas; (i) expanding practical, problem-solving training based on assessment of organisational needs; (j) providing better incentives to attract quality trainers; and (k) providing appropriate compensation structure for public corporation officials and employees (Khan et al., 1989:1-3). The Study Team urged the government to take immediate actions to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations made. The steps suggested by the Study included: (a) providing high-level political support on a continuous basis for enhancing administrative efficiency in order to build a dynamic administration; (b) creation of a strong implementation committee; (c) implementation of existing government directives that would contribute to improved performance; (d) delegation of broader authority to implementing agencies; and (e) strengthening of accountability mechanisms (Khan et al., 1989: 3). The PAES also suggested that its recommendations in certain aspects be implemented on a pilot basis in selected ministries, departments, corporations and projects once the above-mentioned steps had been taken. These aspects included: (a) implementation strategies for improving human resources available to the government; (b) strengthening the problem solving capacity of the O&M Wing; (c) modernising office systems; (d) simplifying procurement procedures; (e) improving auditing systems; and (f) strengthening project planning, implementation and monitoring systems (Khan et al., 1989:3). The Ershad government did not take any action on the PAES Report till its fall in December 1990. On 26 February 1991 the Caretaker Government of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed appointed a Committee composed of seven senior civil servants under the chairmanship of the Additional Secretary, MOE to examine and analyse the recommendations of PAES Report and earmark which of its recommendations were implementable. The Committee submitted its recommendations on 30 June 1991. The Committee felt that a number of recommendations of PAES could be implemented without further delay as these would not require any

change in the existing rules and regulations and not result in additional allocation of resources. The other recommendations could not be implemented without prior changes in the rules and regulations and involving extra expenses. The Khaleda Zia government appointed a Cabinet Sub-Committee headed by a minister to further examine the Committee's recommendations. The Cabinet approved implementation of PAES recommendations on 30 March 1992 with the stipulation that those recommendations that would require major structural changes and involve additional financial resources be referred back to it for decision. On 23 July 1992 an inter-ministerial committee was formed headed by the Secretary, MOE to (a) monitor implementation of recommendations in different ministries/divisions; and (b) suggest ways to remove bottlenecks in the way of implementation. The last meeting of this Committee was held on 18 April 1993. Other MOE actions included: (a) circulation of PAES report along with the review report to all ministries; (b) asking other ministries/divisions monthly progress on the state of implementation of agreed upon recommendations; and (c) establishment of a work study unit in the MOE and twenty-nine ministries/divisions but effectiveness of a such a unit is yet to be tested. Relatively slow progress in implementation of PAES recommendations has been mostly due to: (a) enormity and complexity of the task involved; (b) poor manpower and insufficient financial resources available at the MOE; (c) presence of strong bureaucratic inertia; and (d) lack of trust among civil servants as to the commitment of the government to carry reform measures to their logical conclusion. All these created a situation where civil servants found it convenient to adopt a combination of incremental and muddle through approaches where less controversial and minor recommendations like meeting procedures and filing systems were selectively taken up for implementation. But such implementation strategy had no impact on the civil service performance and efficiency.

4.2.6 Public Administration Sector Study in Bangladesh (PASSB)

The Public Administration Sector Study in Bangladesh (PASSB) was prepared by a team of international and local experts. The study period was six months, i.e. from February 1993 to July 1993. Five key areas were analysed on the basis of primary data. These were: (a) organisation and structure of government; (b) civil service management;

(c) performance and accountability; (d) decision making issues; and (e) human resource development, education and training. Three contextual factors were also studied. They included: (a) administrative culture and norms; (b) policy development and analysis capacity; and (c) administrative challenges arising from the evolving context of government. Also reform implementation was identified as one of the important issues.

The major findings of the Study included: (a) poor performance due to apathy, narrow vision, a lack of commitment and inexperience of civil servants in operating within a democratic system of government; (b) parliamentary committees' ineffectiveness in holding ministries accountable to the parliament; (c) functioning of the secretariat suffers from the risk aversion, interference of politicians and senior officials and lack of data; (d) lack of clarity about the allocation of responsibilities between ministers and civil servants; (e) inefficient distribution of government responsibilities among too many ministries and divisions; (f) slow and complex decision making process; (g) inter-service tensions a feature of relations between cadres, between different batches and between class I officers and others; (h) general dissatisfaction with promotion and transfer; (i) deterioration in the level of education of recruits to the civil service; and (j) inadequacies in all types of training (UNDP, 1993:98-102).

The Study made fifty-two recommendations. The recommendations were organised into two groups, i.e. consolidation and reform proposals. Consolidation measures required immediate remedial actions while reform measures were intended to develop a more responsive, transparent and accountable civil service system. The major recommendations of the Study included: (a) establishing results-oriented management systems through setting of objectives and measures of outputs and impacts throughout the government; (b) establishing units in each ministry and division, responsible for developing and applying performance criteria and measure and developing internal performance audit capability; (c) rationalising government structure following examination of functions and need to improve coordination and to reduce number of ministries and divisions to make government more manageable; (d) systematically review and streamline government rules and regulations to eliminate red tape and redundant functions; (e) selection and promotion of officers be based on merit within a transparent process; (f) strengthening Public Service Commission; (g) decentralisation

of implementation of personnel policies to ministries and divisions; (h) replacing cadre and class system with personnel management system based on position classification and grades, for transparent, fair and efficient management of civil servants in a democratically responsive civil service; (i) understanding on a regular and systematic basis training needs assessment; (j) providing professional development opportunities for individual officers; and (k) appointment of reform implementation commission (UNDP, 1993:103-110). The government appointed an Advisory Committee in July 1993 under the chairmanship of the State Minister for Establishment to review the recommendations of PASSB. The other members of the Committee included seven secretaries, other officers and members of parliament. But from the very beginning senior civil servants were skeptic about the recommendations of PASSB. They felt that the recommendations were nebulous and insufficiently specific and had misgivings about ownership of the recommendations. The Advisory Committee was invited by the consultants to react to the findings of the Study before the report was finalised. But the members refused the offer on the ground that it would be a futile exercise without first having the draft report. On 2 August 1993 the report was presented to the government and its recommendations appeared in press simultaneously creating a sense of panic and anger among senior civil servants. So far the Advisory Committee has done nothing about implementation of PASSB.

4.2.7 Towards Better Government in Bangladesh (TBGB)

The Towards Better Government in Bangladesh (TBGB) Report was the outcome of a three week visit to UK, in June 1993 by four Secretaries of the government of Bangladesh under the sponsorship of Overseas Development Authority (ODA). The TBGB Report made sixty-eight recommendations within six thematic areas covering the entire gamut of the civil service as well as the government. There were both short-term as well as long-term reform measures. The major recommendations of the TBGB included: (a) revision in the quota (reservation) system for recruitment of civil servants and enhancing the merit percentage from existing 45% to 60%; (b) promotion in the civil service be based on merit as demonstrated by performance in appropriate examinations and evaluation based on revised and transparent ACR; (c) three times failure in promotion examinations would compel civil servants to retire from service; (d) instituting a workable predetermined and transparent

standard for efficient and speedy system of delivery of essential services; (e) linking standards of performance to a reward and penalty system; (f) installation of an efficiency unit in the cabinet division to monitor achievement of government-wide targets against standards of performance; (g) maximum use of market and price mechanisms inside the public sector to maximise efficiency and economy, to protect consumers who pay for services rendered by some units of the government; (h) evaluation of performance of public sector training institutions under a technical assistance project and review of training policy; and (i) combating corruption through updating necessary laws, appointing special judges, full use of Anti-Corruption Bureau's resources and revival of Anti-Corruption Council to scrutinise all cases against senior civil servants (Rahman et al., 1993:90-98). The TBGB Report also did not receive enthusiastic support from the BNP government. No attempt was made to seriously review its recommendations. Rather a ministerial level committee headed by the then communication minister was asked to look at it. But this committee even failed to produce a cursory report on the suitability of TBGB Report pertaining to the civil service system in Bangladesh.

4.2.8 Government that Works:

Reforming the Public Sector (RPS)

The RPS Study was sponsored and financed by the World Bank. The Study was conducted between 1994 and 1995 at different phases. The Staff of the World Bank, Bangladeshi experts and some foreign consultants jointly prepared the Study. The Study pointed out a number of negative aspects of public sector in Bangladesh. These included: (i) a state apparatus which extends beyond the core functions of the state; (ii) a disabled economic environment with an intricate web of discretionary and disruptive regulations; (iii) a non-transparent system which is replete with unpredictable and surreptitious decision making on policy and operational aspects, and weak accountability; (iv) an oversized, complex and nearly unmanageable bureaucracy and institutional apparatus; (v) demotivated underpaid public employees at the senior and mid-management levels; (vi) an adversarial relationship between the public and private sectors, contributing both to a loss of credibility of public sector institutions and to obstacles to private sector growth; and (vii) excessively manned SOEs with powerful public sector labour unions which have stymied efforts to reduce the massive losses by public

enterprises, improve the efficiency of their operations or privatise them (The World Bank, 1996a:11).

The massive indictment of the World Bank Report of the public sector in Bangladesh needs to be understood in the context of dwindling, inadequate and poor quality of services delivered to the people. The main thrust of the Report is on delineating the core functions of the government and essential services to be provided to citizens. The Report points to a number of initiatives that need to be coordinated to overcome the wide-ranging deficiencies afflicting the public sector. These include:

- i. Redefining frontiers of public sector which means rightsizing the central government, enlarging the role of non-government organisations, local government and the private sector;
- ii. Enhancing level and nature of accountability and responsiveness of public organisations to their owners, i.e. parliament, citizens and consumers;
- iii. Streamlining regulations, laws and processes to ensure transparency, fairness and automacity of legal and regulatory institutions, policies and practices;
- iv. Overhauling rules and processes by which government conducts its policy and decision making functions; and
- v. Maintaining an efficient, committed and professional public service, without which government can neither be efficient nor responsive (The World Bank, 1996a:xvi).

The Study underscored the difficulty of implementing major administrative reforms. But it warned that the 'cost of doing nothing will be lower growth, continued poverty and citizens continuing to receive less for more' (The World Bank, 1996a:xix). Reforming the machinery of government must be viewed as a long drawn out process which needs more than anything else 'unequivocal and sustained commitment of political leadership to a less intrusive and more efficient government' (The World Bank, 1996a:xix). Though political vision and mandate are crucial still the experience of other countries which have been successful in reforming their public sector indicates the importance of two levers of change. First, high-powered and professionally staffed institutional mechanisms must be in place to engender reforms, i.e. to design reforms, to operationalise them and monitor their implementation at every stage. Second, sound budget process is advocated to discipline the quality and direction of public expenditure policy. The Study Report

was released in March 1996 to selected individuals only. It has already been presented formally to the government.

4.2.9 Taming Leviathan: Reforming Governance in Bangladesh

This study took as its starting point the Bank's comprehensive study of public sector institutions entitled 'Government That Works' published in June 1996. This effort by the World Bank was initiated in 1999 and finally the report came in front of public in 2000. Bangladesh public bureaucracy has been facing many new pressures that demand a lot of changes in the institution. Changes could be brought through reform efforts, but labour for reform in the public bureaucracy is still in the slower side. Bangladesh has to accelerate the pace of reform to compete in the tough global market. Faster process of reform could reduce the number of people living below the extreme poverty line as well which is one of the chief goals of MDG (The World Bank, 2002). The World Bank sought good governance as the major prerequisite of development in Bangladesh. In their famous study named 'Taming Leviathan', the World Bank tried to figure out five strategies for reforming the governance system. They suggested those five strategies to ensure good governance and better service delivery by the public bureaucracy. The five strategies stated in this report by the World Bank are very useful to reform the administration as one of those strongly recommends stimulating the process of administrative reform. Those six suggestions are:

1. Strengthen the System of Accountability. Accountability of the public bureaucracy could be ensured through; (a) reinforcing the role of parliament, (b) upholding the Supreme Court as it is the ultimate guarantor of the constitutional rights of the citizen, (c) tight financial accountability mechanism and (d) promoting transparency by protecting the independence of the media.
2. Strengthen Civil Society. Civil society is another way to hold the public bureaucracy accountable to the people. People's voice is expressed through the civil society and that is why it is need to be strengthened.
3. Decentralisation. Decentralising the power and authority of the government institutions or the public sector has been one of the apex demands of the people since independence. By decentralisation the public sector could be able to go closer to

the poor people and ultimately their voice would be reflected in the national development schemes.

4. Energise Administrative Reform. The World Bank suggests the ways to energise the administrative reform. To ensure good governance by making the public sector more efficient and proactive to the needs of the society and people it is necessary to give more incentives to the public bureaucrats, maintain the process of promotion and postings based on merit, establish a credible oversight system, ensure transparency and performance management, delegate authorities and power to field level agencies and exploit the unrealised potential of the E-Government.
5. Mobilise Public Support for Reform. Well informed and educated public is needed to facilitate or energise the administrative reform. Without people's concern and support no administrative reform would be desirable as the pathway of making the pro-people public sector.

4.2.10 MATT 1 (Managing at the Top 1)

Managing At the Top 1 was DFID funded program which had Ministry of Establishment as its implementing body. The MATT 1 program (1999-2002) was a recognisable response to energise change through the creation of a 'reform minded' group of managers or leaders at the heart of the Government (Jacobs, 2009). This program gained relatively less success because within a small period of time it managed to involve only a small portion (100) of the top managers (mostly Joint and Additional Secretaries) working in the public sector. Because of the involvement of such a small group of people from huge civil service the impact was not significant for instituting changes in the HRM within the public sector. Due to the low achievement of this program (MATT 1) the DFID was requested by the Government of Bangladesh to follow up with another program so that the top level officers in the civil service can obtain required expertise to initiate necessary changes and reforms within the administration for achieving the broad goal of pro-poor service delivery and development.

4.2.11 MATT 2 (Managing at the Top 2)

MATT 1 was followed up by MATT 2, which is a joint program implemented by of the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA),

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and DFID, UK. MATT 2 (Managing at the Top 2) commenced on 11 June 2006 in the Ministry of Establishment of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. MATT 2 is a seven-year program totally funded by DFID. This program is based on the theme of human resource development within the Bangladesh Civil Service so that the officers can ensure incremental reforms in the administration to achieve the goal of pro-poor service delivery. The program set the prime goal of creating a critical mass of reform minded civil servants who, through mutual support and pressure, at strategic and influential locations within the civil service, and through their own improved performance, will generate and demand administrative reform from inside the Bangladesh Civil Service.

Mission

The mission of MATT 2 is to generate improved performance of the officers at the top positions in the civil service and across all ministries. Two ways are suggested to achieve this objective. These are:

1. through developing reformed HRM systems within the Bangladesh Civil Service including the development of the Career Planning Wing of the Ministry of Public Administration (earlier Ministry of Establishment); and
2. through a performance-oriented, management development program (MATT, Website).

Major Objectives

The primary objective of the MATT 2 is to assist the Government of Bangladesh to create the conditions for incremental administrative reform and performance improvement within the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) through the provision of technical expertise, knowledge transfer and capacity-building for senior managers. The purpose of the MATT 2 project is to create a critical mass of reform-minded civil servants who through mutual support and pressure, through their strategic and influential locations within the civil service, and through their own improved performance will generate and demand administrative reform from inside the BCS. The purpose will be achieved through a combination of appropriate training, support to sustainable training capacity, support to reform of human resource management systems, and demand-generation activities aimed both within the BCS and at

civil society 'users'. The consultant will work with the Ministry of Public Administration to develop policy and systems for performance-based management within the BCS and with the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) to develop and deliver a sustainable training capacity to create reform-minded, customer-focused and performance-oriented senior civil service managers. The Consultant will also assist the Ministry of Public Administration in further development of the MATT 2 project policy, systems and procedure, and in project management including programming, budgeting, financial and progress reporting. The detail action plan of MATT 2 is given below:

1. strengthen strategic HR capacity in Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) through training, internships, mentoring & consultancy support;
2. develop systems for improved need-based deployment through: work force & career planning; merit-based promotion and performance appraisal;
3. design & deliver a practical, performance-based and graduated training program informed by national & international best practice;
4. design PIP methodology & appraisal criteria, facilitate implementation & learning, evaluate & reward outcome;
5. facilitate Organisational Development (OD) review of the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Center (BPATC) to determine changes required to strengthen its faculty;
6. develop capacity of BPATC through curriculum & materials development, research/knowledge management, TOT, mentoring, specialised training & fellowships;
7. establish effective training & learning partnerships with NGO and private sector training providers;
8. commission marketing & publicity to enhance MATT status & profile and publicise success inside and outside BCS;
9. promote continued learning and mutual support for alumni through regular seminars, together with conference, newsletter and website; and
10. design and implement monitoring and evaluation system including pre and post learning assessment, external review panels and scrutiny by National Training Council. (MATT, Website).

4.2.12 *Civil Service Change Management Program (CSCMP)*

Civil Service Change Management Program (CSCMP) is a civil service reform program, run by the Ministry of Establishment (MOE), with the technical assistance of UNDP. It was originally conceived in 2007 and officially commenced in 2008. Apart from a few minor activities in 2008 and the first half of 2009, the project became truly operational in mid-2009. The project office is located at BIAM Foundation. The project duration is from January 01, 2008 to December 31, 2012 (UNDP, 2012). The Civil Service Change Management Program (CSCMP) is an initiative of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and the UNDP with the aim to provide 'a toolbox or road map' for civil service reform in Bangladesh. This public administration reform program aims at supporting the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in undertaking strategic, doable and high-leverage initiatives. CSCMP does not intend to design, develop and implement wholesale public administration reform. Instead, its main aim is to put the BCS on the road to change, in line with the essentially incremental and unpredictable nature of change. The Program devotes ample attention to implementation, more specifically, to the management of the changes. The Program attempts to realise this output through strategic interventions in carefully selected reform areas, in order to create maximum leverage for further reform activities.

- Component A: Change Management, Human Resources and Performance Management;
- Component B: Capacity Development and Transformation of Some Selected Government Institutions;
- Component C: Ethics and Integrity in the Civil Service (NSU, MPPG, Website).

The Program aims to provide assistance to the Government of Bangladesh through initiating strategic interventions that will generate improvements and gradual transformations in the civil service. The Program comprises three components: (a) managing change in the civil service; (b) capacity development of civil service training institutions; and (c) ethics and integrity. This Program compliments UNDP's strategy to strengthen accountable and responsive governing institutions through supporting public administration reforms in national government and local authorities. (UN, Website)

Objectives of the CSCMP

The main objective of the project is to contribute to the further development of the Bangladesh Civil Service into a modern, effective, responsive, accountable and transparent public service provider that is able to anticipate and serve the needs of the People and Government of Bangladesh. It aims to do so by:

- encouraging the exploitation of emerging strategic opportunities with potential high-leverage;
- introducing modern change management techniques to effectively implement reforms and changes;
- assist in the implementation of a modern Human Resource Management system; Provide support in the development of a forward looking national human resource development structure and environment;
- facilitate the productive collaboration between civil service and citizens, especially at the field administration level;
- promote the review and revision of antiquated business processes, rules & procedures and organisational structures (including strengthening field administration);
- development of the Civil Service Reform Roadmap;
- understand the concept and dynamics of change;
- gain a pragmatic approach to manage change and its impact;
- assess the impact of change on the organisation and wider environment;
- identify the directions for change and develop capacity for change in Bangladesh Civil Service;
- understand the importance of customer-focused public service delivery from the perspective of change management;
- acquire the skills to design effective change implementation road map and strategies;
- drafting of the Civil Service Act and human resource initiatives, such as performance based management and gender mainstreaming;
- technical assistance to the Public Service Commission to formulate business process instructions;

- formulation and implementation of Second Generation Citizen's Charter and citizen's report cards through engaging citizens;
- organising of Public Service Fairs and other events that brings the Civil Service into contact with its stakeholders;
- supporting more modern forms of HRM that link career progression and professional development, and that cherish talent and that explore systemic learning opportunities; and
- enhancement of e-Administration capacities between central and field administrations (NSU, MPPG).

4.2.13 Police Reform Program

The Government of Bangladesh, in partnership with United Nations Development Program (UNDP), DFID and European Commission (EC), is implementing the Police Reform Program (PRP). The duration of the project's Phase-I was four and a half years (January 2005-June 2009). The program's Phase-II is being implemented by the Police Department, Ministry of Home Affairs with the overall purpose to develop a safer and more secured environment based on respect for human rights and equitable access to justice through police reform and which is also responsive to the needs of poor and vulnerable people including women. (Data Management Aid, 2009, p. 1)

Brief Description

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GOB) recognises the importance of an efficient and effective police force as an integral part of the broader justice sector and as a key contributor to a safer and more secured environment based on respect for human rights, equitable access to justice and observance of the rule of law. In partnership with UNDP and other development agencies, the GOB has supported reform and renewal of the Bangladesh Police to improve the administration of justice and the maintenance of law and order including international norms for human rights. This cooperation between GOB and UNDP has resulted in the preparation of a Needs Assessment Report and a Project Support Document for improving police effectiveness. Police Reform Program (PRP), aims at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Bangladesh Police by supporting key areas of access to justice; including crime prevention, investigations, police

operations and prosecutions; human resource management and training; and, future directions, strategic capacity and oversight. The program complements other GOB and development partners' projects in policing and the broader criminal justice sector and is designed to assist the Bangladesh Police to improve performance and professionalism consistent with broader government objectives and community expectations including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and women.

Key Components of PRP

There are six key components to support the program goal and longer-term outcome. The components provide a conceptual and strategic framework for the duration of the program:

- Component 1: Crime Prevention;
- Component 2: Investigations, Operations and Prosecutions;
- Component 3: Human Resource Management and Training;
- Component 4: Strategy and Oversight;
- Component 5: Program Management;
- Component 6: Communication;
- Component 7: Trafficking in Human Beings.

Concepts of Model Thana

Model *Thanas* have been established in metropolitan and rural locations to demonstrate how pro-people policing can benefit the community and ensure their needs and expectations can be met. Personnel of this model *Thanas* will be gender inclusive and trained to enhance skill levels and prepare them to implement a more pro-people policing approach in their engagements with the local community. Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) would be developed for the model *Thanas* through workshops that are being held at each model *Thana*. People from various walks of life, government officers, representatives from various NGOs and local government department have been participating in the Model *Thana* workshop and contributing in preparation of SOP. Usually all model *Thanas* would be conducted following the SOP.

Right now there are 11 Model *Thanas*. They are as follows:

- Dhanmondi Thana, DMP, Dhaka;

- Uttara Thana, DMP, Dhaka;
- Narayanganj Sadar Thana, Narayanganj;
- Narsingdi Sadar Thana, Narsingdi;
- Bhaluka Thana, Mymensingh;
- Panchlaish Thana, CMP, Chittagong;
- Patenga Thana, CMP, Chittagong;
- Feni Sadar Thana, Feni;
- Comilla Sadar Thana, Comilla;
- Chandpur Sadar Thana, Chandpur;
- Kotwali Thana, Jessore.

4.2.14 Civil Service Reform in Bangladesh

To identify existing major drawbacks within the Bangladesh Civil Service and to recommend practical actions for restructuring/reorganising the civil service within a short span of time UNDP in Bangladesh conducted a study on civil service reform. Major issues covered by the study report are overall human resource management policies, capacity development of major HR-related government agencies, change management, and some elements of anti-corruption in the Civil service (Kim and Monem, 2009). The UNDP study (2007) suggested that various changes should take place in the near future with a clear focus on managing change, human resource management (including individual performance management), human resource development and organisational performance management. The study focused on the following important aspects:

- Managing change;
- Human resource management;
- Human resource development.

Overview of Program Components and Strategies

The proposal comprises of two main components with six strategies:

- Component A: Change Management, Human Resources and Performance Management; and
- Component B: Capacity building and transformation in specific HR-institutions.

Recommendations

The report recommends that specific changes should take place in the near future with a clear focus on managing change, human resource management (including individual performance management), human resource development and organisational performance management. Specifically the recommendations include:

1. The Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA) should play a leading role in spearheading the modernisation of the human resources management system, including significant input from many other stakeholders.
2. Specific ministerial committees and inter-ministerial task forces should address primary areas of concern including, among others: formulating government-wide models to promote the benefits of productive, rewarding careers in the public service; improving the systems for handling and managing the personnel records of the government officers; improving the systems for disseminating information and for efficient and responsive delivery of internal HR-services; and, developing new approaches and procedures for efficient and effective civil servants' performance management throughout the government.
3. Modernising the civil servants performance management system should be undertaken without any further delay.
4. In order to enhance Bangladesh's expertise in public performance management efforts should be made to learn from best practices around the world as well as involving partners from different sectors within the country.
5. Practical guidelines should be developed on organisational performance management using examples from Bangladesh best practices.
6. Support pilot agencies in publicly announcing their critical performance criteria and service delivery standards and in monitoring their compliance with the set standards.
7. Support pilot agencies for developing innovative ways to improve their service delivery standards and increase their organisational performance levels, including support in the

use of a managing change strategy and technical expertise for redesigning work processes.

8. Pilot and/or experiment with integrated assessment approaches; including external expert feedback and/or external audit of organisational performance and/or stakeholder feedback and assessments.
9. Design and implement innovative government practices to encourage public organisations and civil servants towards better performance and/or innovation.
10. Conduct a step by step evolution towards high levels of transparency and trustworthiness of Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) and gradually restore its public image.
11. Develop a detailed long-term vision for the BPSC.
12. Involve concerned managers in specifying their HR-needs and make sure that the BPSC selects and recommends candidates (for recruitment or promotion) of better quality and more fitting the organisational and job specific needs.
13. Strengthen the research capacity of BPSC, among others with respect to impact analysis of BPSC selections and with respect to the position of the BPSC and the government on the Bangladesh labour market.
14. Gradually modernise BPSC's examination and selection methodologies and procedures.
15. Develop and gradually implement a vision on and a detailed action plan for organisational development and professional strengthening of BPSC.
16. Strengthen the "independence" of BPSC in financial, operational and other perspectives.
17. Use the BCS Administrative Academy (BCSAA) as an *Incubator, Pilot Site and Model for Institutional Reform* to apply experiential-based, problem-based workshops, and develop the BCSAA as a model institution by implementing a range of transformational strategies and actions for enhancing institutional value, in a way that can then be applied to priority areas at the BPATC and to other public sector training institutions, as appropriate.

The Six Strategies of the proposed Civil Service Reform Program are complementary; they reinforce and support each other.

1. Managing human resources, including their performance and careers, should be interlinked with human resources development. All these HR-issues should then contribute to and therefore be in line with the needs for organisational performance in the civil service.
2. Changing mindsets of civil servants—towards “performance”, “client oriented service delivery”, “good governance”, “and stakeholder responsiveness”—may remain theoretical without (promoting) Bangladesh examples, pilots and best practices of good organisational performance and corresponding service standards, publicly assessed and open for stakeholder feedback.
3. Experience in different countries shows that addressing individual performance or developing the individual civil servants’ performance rarely succeeds if organisational performance is not also addressed explicitly. Both tracks of “individual performance” and “organisational performance” should be addressed in an interlinked approach.
4. Assessing quality and timeliness of service and evaluating the level of integrity is often less difficult at the organisational level.
5. The agenda of the “high level AR body” becomes more appealing, certainly also for the external stakeholders, if the issue of planning/ managing/ monitoring/ evaluating “organisational performance” is included as well.
6. Evaluation of organisational performance, linked with significant incentives for both organisation and staff, can stimulate healthy group pressure towards attaining set standards for quality and timeliness of service and for reaching verifiable levels of integrity and risk mitigation within the organisation.

4.2.15 Developing Civil Service Capacity for the 21st Century Administration

The project, ‘Developing Civil Service Capacity for the 21st Century Administration’ is a Preparatory Assistance (PA) program funded by UNDP. The Executing Agency for this program is Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA), which is the parent ministry for appointment, posting and promotion of the civil service officials. The Bangladesh

Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), the apex training institute in the public sector of Bangladesh responsible for training of the core civil service officials, is the implementing partner of this PA phase. The main objectives of this preparatory assistance program are to assess the capacity requirements of some selected institutions and to ensure that various stakeholders are consulted and their opinions are taken into account in view of UNDP's long-term support to capacity development for civil service reforms and administrative modernisation for the 21st century.

The missions of this program are:

- a. public administration reform for efficient, effective, responsive, and pro-poor public services promotion; and
- b. establishment of institutional/legal/policy/frameworks to promote and ensure accountability, transparency and integrity in the public service.

The intended results are based on the following outputs:

- i. to develop an institutional development plan for the BPATC and MOPA;
- ii. study on the cost-effectiveness of selected training operations and institutions in the civil service;
- iii. internet and LAN connections for all faculty staff;
- iv. review of curricula in the BPATC;
- v. study on the role and effectiveness of civil service in achieving the MDGs;
- vi. study on recruitment policies in the civil service and draft project proposal for support to the BPSC;
- vii. study on ethics in the civil service; and
- viii. detailed implementation plan for the National Training Policy.

Recommendations

The proposed intervention areas are as follows:

1. Developing a National Strategy;
2. Central MDG coordinating Cell;
3. Move from Political Commitment to Action;
4. Strengthening National and Local Capacity;
5. Setting up an Advisory Structure;
6. Localising MDGs;

7. Building Awareness;
8. Reliable Data and Information;
9. Reform Policies to Create an Enabling Environment;
10. Accountability in the Civil Service;
11. People's Access to Information;
12. Coordination between the Civil Servants Working in the Field;
13. Political Will and Accountability;
14. Campaigning;
15. Monitoring;
16. Greater Involvement of Parliament;
17. Proper Coordination of Sectoral Projects Interventions in the Governorate under the Law concerning;
18. Capacity Building of the Local Administration in Planning and Implementing Local Development Goals through.

In addition to above recommendations, the program recommends the following to make the administrative system of Bangladesh more efficient, effective and service-oriented to accelerate progress towards achieving Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). These are:

1. It is critical to develop a clear and specific legal framework for decentralised governance that includes the constitutional devolution of political, financial and administrative powers to lower level units.
2. It is also crucial to formulate a long-term developmental perspective on good local community governance to allow adequate time frames for learning-by-doing, supplemented with demand-driven capacity development rather than the imposition of certain standards and supply-driven training by means of rational project management mechanisms.
3. It is time to further enlarge the scope of decentralised programs for more devolution of responsibilities for local services to lower level units must take the subsidiary principle into account and involve commensurate transfers of financial resources and fiscal powers to ensure continued quality, coverage and sustainability of service delivery.
4. There is a need for strategic decisions related to cost effectiveness and the delegation of responsibilities to ensure quality service

- delivery and accountability. Also need to assess the devolution of powers to mitigate the costs of infrastructure and personnel.
5. There is also need to develop a stronger policy basis to increase transparency and improve accountability via developing indicators and standards for measuring performance in service delivery at the local level, strengthening guidelines for internal managerial controls, and broadening the role of oversight institutions which perform financial and service delivery audits, investigate corruption and irregularities and report to the public on their findings.
 6. Systematic efforts are needed now to build capacity of all stakeholders, including Upazila, Municipality and Thana officials and citizens representatives; Union *Parishad* chairmen, members and senior citizens, as well as community members, NGOs, and political leaders.
 7. In order to encourage local leaders to play an active role for harnessing government resources for the local programs and services, so that they are motivated to mobilise the local community to participate actively in ensuring that community standards and goals of all members are met.
 8. To create governance systems with constitutional and statutory devolution of powers to sub-national units according to the principles of subsidiary, effective empowerment and equitable sharing of responsibilities and resources.
 9. To improve the relationship between the politicians and the civil servants, where politicians should act as the bosses and the civil servants should translate the vision of the government into action. In doing so civil servants should insulate themselves from the personal influence of politicians and political parties.
 10. To create an enabling legal and regulatory environment for both civil society and private sector organisations to become effective partners in governance, which should include the media and other learning institutions that have key roles in advocacy and in achieving transparency and empowerment?
 11. To develop a participatory decision-making and partnership with stakeholders' core principles of the operation of the governance system at all levels, recognising that these are at the core of good governance and not just conveniences in the interest of increased legitimacy, effectiveness and efficiency.

12. To institute citizen's charters to provide regular feedback on publicly-derived and validated indices of good governance at all levels and reward units for meeting public expectations in service delivery and other aspects of governance.
13. To bring changes in the scheme of civil service training. Instead of providing a wide sweep of various subjects, modules should be designed according to the skills and knowledge required to perform the various jobs during the initial years in the civil service. Some of the modules could include training in behavioural areas and general administration. Those who have served for a period of ten years should be given specialised training in district administration emphasising training, for example, on development administration, data and information technologies, modern techniques for coordination, etc. For those who have worked more than twenty years, training in policy administration and new aspects of modern management in the field of policy formulation and implementation should be provided.
14. Ensure that selection for training overseas is based on specific criteria and needs, not on the basis of favouritism, nepotism or other reasons. The selection process needs to be open and transparent.
15. Initiatives to improve the relationship between politicians and civil servants, where politicians should facilitate the civil servants in translating the vision of the government into action. In doing so civil servants could insulate themselves from personal influence from politicians and political parties and aim to win the trust and confidence of the citizen.

The analysis indicated that the 'capacity development' in the Bangladesh Civil Service needs emphasis at three levels, i.e. the individual level, the institutional level, and the societal level. At the individual level it involves establishing the conditions under which civil servants are able to embark on a continuous process of learning and adapting to change—building on existing knowledge and skills and enhancing and using them in new directions. This requires a new approach to human resource management and also points to the importance of knowledge management, as the new vehicle for increased learning. At the institutional level, a similar approach, needs to be applied and support, should focus on administrative modernisation

with a priority on systems and processes. Key requirement in this process is capacity development for policy support and for organisational effectiveness. Finally capacity development at the societal level is required to support the more interactive public administration that equally learns from its actions and from the feedback it receives from the population.

4.3 CONCLUSION

There is a clear understanding among the donor community that the civil service in particular and the public sector in general due to structural, procedural and related deficiencies is completely out of pace with the reality as it obtains in Bangladesh. All the donor-sponsored studies pointed out in greater detail the fundamental and debilitating malice which have contributed to inefficiency, waste, low moral and corruption in the public sector. Naturally, the changes suggested by the reform bodies are essentially intended to transform the nature and character of the public sector. Mechanisms and strategies have also been recommended to operationalise and manage wide-ranging changes. Not unexpectedly, the response from the government to donor initiatives has been lukewarm. Nothing much has happened. The intention is clear—not to change as long as possible and to provide excuses as to why change is not feasible now. The international donors have had almost no success in convincing the successive governments from that of General Ziaur Rahman to present government to implement reforms which would radically change the structure and composition of the public service and orientation and work habits of public servants. The response of Sheikh Hasina's government to donor reform initiatives is not clear as yet.

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CHAPTER 5

Resistance to Major Administrative Reforms in South Asian Civil Services

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Excepting Nepal, the other countries of South Asia were under British rule for a considerable period of time. Though all these countries were granted independence in late '40s, the British influence on their respective administrative systems is still considerable. This has been described as the imperial legacy which has shaped and continues to mould the administrative style and bureaucratic culture of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Though Nepal escaped direct colonial rule, it was not totally immune from British influence. It suited the British interest in the subcontinent to maintain the semi-colony status of Nepal under which its rulers enjoyed internal autonomy, 'in exchange for preponderant influence in foreign and trade policies' by the British (Blaikie et al., 1980:31-32). Overwhelming majority of the population of all these countries live in abject poverty, suffer from hunger and malnutrition, face the curse of illiteracy, forced with unemployment or underemployment and contribute to high rate of fertility. The basic needs of the majority of the population remain unfulfilled. Inequitable social system which contributes to such a deplorable situation is further reinforced by the caste system, differentiation based on religion and wealth and ethnic conflict. The political systems of five South Asian nations do not differ much on the surface. But a close look will indicate

significant differences in terms of how the systems operate. India has a parliamentary system of government. But since independence the Indian government has been dominated by members of one family. This family is known as the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty which ruled India for about forty eight years out of sixty eight years of India's existence as an independent country. Also the dominance of one political party—the Congress Party in the Indian politics has been remarkable. All the Prime Ministers of independent India were members of the Congress Party. A few of them left the party later to form their own political parties and to forge alliance with other political parties in a bid to head the government. It may be pointed out that all the Indian Prime Ministers, excepting four, came from the core of one region—the Uttar Pradesh.

Pakistan's political history has been characterised by prolonged periods of military rule and political use of religion to suppress democratic movements. The present government is an elected one led by President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan People's Party the predecessor of Benazir Bhutto's government was that of Sharif's elected government. Pakistan has witnessed successive bouts of military rule with intermittent civilian governments.

Sri Lanka, after experimenting with the parliamentary system for two decades, settled for a presidential form of government for over a decade. With decisive victory of the decade long civil war of Sinhali majority over Tamil minority has considerably strengthened the position of the present Sinhali government though opposition Sihali politicians led by a former Chief of Army Staff and war hero has considerable popularity within the country.

In Nepal, popular movements and mass demonstrations led to the formation of a democratic government system in Nepal and ouster of a long-entrenched monarchy. But since the abolition of monarchy stability in the governance has remained uncertain and chaotic as political parties having different shades of ideology have failed to agree on the constitution of the country.

In all these countries, barring few exceptions, higher public servants have maintained a close relationship with the politicians and generals in power. Politicians at the helm of state affairs have found it beneficial to depend rather heavily on the 'elite' civil servants. Higher civil servants with generalist background and occupying key positions as heads of ministries and corporations have been more comfortable in working with authoritarian regimes. The authoritarian rulers, on the other hand,

devoid of public support and immune from public scrutiny, have been found eager to forge alliance with these civil servants, whose patronising attitude towards people are too well known.

5.2 MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM EFFORTS IN SOUTH ASIAN CIVIL SERVICES

This section contains analysis of major administrative reform efforts in South Asian countries excepting Bangladesh focusing specifically on the higher civil services. From each country one or more cases have been chosen to highlight the reasons for resistance to major administrative reform proposals and consequently their non-implementation. In Pakistan where major administrative reforms succeeded have also been analysed. Inferences have also been drawn in the process of the analysis to indicate the conditions under which major administrative reforms can be implemented.

5.2.1 India

Since independence in 1947 a number of commissions, committees and experts have been appointed to study various facets of India's administrative system and to recommend necessary changes. But none have gone deeper and examined the whole system of administration as such, and almost all have been prisoners of the existing framework and the system that underscore it (Maheshwari, 1972:15). No attempt was made to assess the utility of a highly centralised and elitist civil service, i.e. the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). The chairman of the Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) K. Hanumanthaiya bluntly pointed out that 'during the last twenty years (1947-1966), there were only adjustments and no reforms in the administration' (*The Hindustan Times*, 28 April 1967). The only exceptions to this trend were the reports of the ARC. The Commission was appointed in 1966 and submitted twenty reports and made a total of 581 recommendations by 1970 when it was wound up. Of these reports the one on personnel administration attracted lots of attention. The ARC was given a broad mandate to examine the public administration of the country and make recommendations for reform and reorganisation to ensure efficiency and maintain integrity in the public service to enable the public servants to be responsive to the people's needs. This broad mandate as well as the composition of the Commission which originally included six

members, of which five were politicians including the chairman, enabled it to recommend reform measures which were strikingly different from either those which preceded it or those which followed it.

The major recommendations of ARC included: (i) ending the preeminent position of IAS generalists, in the central secretariat and allowing all competent class I officers from all services, access to middle and senior management posts in the secretariat; (ii) placing people from the specialist services to man top posts in particular subject areas in the secretariat where specialist services already existed to attend to specialist subjects; and (iii) categorising all middle level posts in non-specialist areas in the secretariat into eight broad areas of specialisation and basing selection to these posts on the basis of a mid-career competitive examination from all Class I officers (Potter, 1986:169). The recommendations of the ARC were fundamental in nature and had far reaching implications. If implemented, the recommendations would have affected the very foundation of the IAS—the elitism. The recommendations were meant to open up opportunities to all competent civil servants on the basis of proven ability irrespective of their service affiliation and thereby ending the IAS monopoly to all-top posts in the central and state governments. The chairman of the ARC clearly foresaw the resistance the recommendations would generate from within the civil service. He clearly stated in his covering letter to the Prime Minister of India when submitting the Report on Personnel Administration that 'the reforms we have recommended are bound to raise resistance from those who are adversely affected. Resistance from within the service is a very difficult problem for the government to deal with' (Report on Personnel Administration, 1969:iv). Still, none of the major recommendations of ARC were accepted by the government. The reasons for the resistance towards and consequently non-implementation of the reform proposals can be attributed to two sets of factors. First, strong and organised resistances were put up to ARC's recommendation by members of the IAS apprehending downgrading of their status if the proposals were implemented. Some senior members of the IAS at that time not only defended the elitism but developed arguments challenging the assumptions of ARC's recommendations (Chaturvedi, 1969; Dubhashi, 1969; Mohanty, 1969). The power of the IAS within the bureaucracy to control the process of administrative reform is certainly an important part of the explanation of how and why they managed to beat off the challenge of the ARC's major recommendations in the

Report on Personnel Administration (Potter, 1986:171). Second, there was no strong political will to accept and implement ARC's recommendations. Political developments at the time adversely affected the prospect of the ARC. Also there was something to do with the political timing. It was the government of Lal Bahadur Shastri which announced its intention to set up an ARC in November 1965 and the plan was for the Commission to complete its work before the general elections of 1967. By the time the Commission started its work in April 1966, Indira Gandhi had taken over the Prime Ministership after the sudden death of Shastri. Also Morarji Desai, the first chairman of the ARC, was left out of the government after the split of the Congress Party in 1969. So the Commission's composition was not to the liking of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Also, 1967 general elections brought a number of non-Congress governments in the states thereby reducing the strength of the Congress government at the Centre (Potter, 1986:171). More importantly, there was broad political support from the ruling Congress Party at the Centre for the continued existence of the IAS (Potter, 1986:178).

A well-functioning civil service helps to foster good policymaking, effective service delivery, accountability and responsibility in utilising public resources which are the characteristics of good governance. "Good Governance" is being used as an all inclusive framework not only for administrative and civil service reform, but as a link between Civil Service Reform and an all-embracing framework for making policy decisions effective within viable systems of accountability and citizen participation. Administrative reform focuses on rationalising structures of government (Satish, 2004). In the new millennium most of the countries around the globe shifted their focus of administrative or civil service reform from core structural changes in the administration to intermingle between administrative reform and the concept of good governance. During the last decade the Indian government has tried to reform the civil service and administration by forming few reform committees and commissions. Most significant attempts include: Surindar Committee in 2003, Committee on Civil Service Reform, 2004 and Second Administrative Reforms Commission, 2005. In 2003, the Surindar Nath Committee submitted a comprehensive report to the Government of India pertaining the system of performance appraisal, promotion, empanelment and placement for the All India Services and the higher civil services of the Union Government. The Surindar Committee suggested that officers may be assigned to a maximum of three domains out of the eleven domains.

The assignment of domains may be a part of the empanelment process at Joint Secretary / Assistant Secretary levels which would identify officers for posting in the Government of India at levels of Joint Secretary and above. Officers due for consideration for empanelment may submit a write-up summarising their experience, academic background, training courses undertaken, research accomplishments, recognitions relevant to the domain areas, and significant achievements during their career relevant to their areas. These write-ups may be scrutinised by the Empanelment Committee. The output of the empanelment process would be a list of officers found suitable for selection to specific positions under the Central Staffing Scheme, together with their domain assignments (ARC, 2008). The Surindar Committee further suggested that for the empanelment process, individual batches may be taken up sequentially along with those from the previous batches who are due for review (ARC, 2008). The Committee headed by Shri B.N. Yugandhar also submitted its report on building up of skills and competencies by providing training to All India Services officers at different stages of their service careers (CCSR, 2004).

The Hota Committee on Civil Services Reforms, 2004 recommended replacing the ACR with a system of performance assessment in which greater emphasis is placed on objective assessment against agreed work plans (ARC, 2008:22). The Committee also recommended use of modern tools of performance appraisal like 360 Degree Feedback. Before implementing the recommendations of Surindar and Hota Committee the government established the Second Administrative Reforms Commission in 2005. Two committees followed by one commission in reality did not help the government to implement the recommendations by those two committees. That is why evaluation could not be made to ascertain whether the recommendations made by Surindar Committee and Hota Committee on performance appraisal system in practice works. The Second Administrative Reforms Commission was constituted to produce a detailed blue print for Indian administration and civil service which would be a modern one to ensure good governance through participation, accountability, ICT. The commission submitted 15 reports on different aspects of administration and civil service in India. The mandates of this Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) were:

- i. Organisational Structure of the Government of India;
- ii. Ethics in Governance;

- iii. Refurbishing of Personnel Administration;
- iv. Strengthening of Financial Management Systems;
- v. Steps to Ensure Effective Administration at the State Level;
- vi. Steps to Ensure Effective District Administration;
- vii. Local Self-Government/Panchayati Raj Institutions;
- viii. Social Capital, Trust and Participative Public Service Delivery;
- ix. Citizen-centric Administration;
- x. Promoting e-governance;
- xi. Issues of Federal Polity;
- xii. Crisis Management; and
- xiii. Public Order.

The Commission presented the following fifteen reports to the Government for consideration:

1. Right to Information-Master Key to Good Governance;
2. Unlocking Human Capital—Entitlements and Governance—a Case Study;
3. Crisis Management-From Despair to Hope;
4. Ethics in Governance;
5. Public Order;
6. Local Governance;
7. Capacity Building for Conflict Resolution—Friction to Fusion;
8. Combating Terrorism;
9. Social Capital—A Shared Destiny;
10. Refurbishing of Personnel Administration—Scaling New Heights;
11. Promoting e-Governance—The Smart Way Forward;
12. Citizen Centric Administration—The Heart of Governance;
13. Organisational Structure of Government of India;
14. Strengthening Financial Management Systems;
15. State & District Administration.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2008) headed by Veerappa Moily recommended that the subject of Public Administration/Governance be made mandatory for aspiring civil servants, besides setting up of National Institutes of Public Administration and the

Central Services Authority. The Government of India has come up with a draft Public Services Bill (2007) that aims to change the nature of the civil services as well as face the challenges to governance in the context of complex global challenges (Pardhasaradhi and Kaur, 2011). Of these, the first, eighth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth reports have come up with crucial suggestions in the realm of civil service reforms. The tenth report on Refurbishing of Personnel Administration—Scaling New Heights recommended the setting up of National Institutes of Public Administration to run Bachelor's Degree courses in public administration/governance/management. In the long run it is expected that these specialised centres of excellence (National Institutes of Public Administration) would evolve as major sources of civil services aspirants (Pardhasaradhi and Kaur, 2011).

Implementation of 2nd ARC's Recommendations

The Government constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) on 30 March 2007 under the Chairmanship of the then External Affairs Minister to consider the recommendations of the Second ARC and to review the pace of implementation of the recommendations as well as to provide guidance to the concerned Ministries/ Departments in implementing the decisions. It has since been reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Union Finance Minister on 21.08.2009. Core Group on Administrative Reforms under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary has finished examination of all fifteen reports. This Group of Ministers also considered eleven reports, namely (i) Right to Information: Master Key to Good Governance (First report), (ii) Unlocking Human Capital: Entitlements and Governance—a Case Study relating to NREGA (Second Report), (iii) Crisis Management: From Despair to Hope (Third Report), (iv) Ethics in Governance (Fourth Report), (v) Local Governance (Sixth Report), (vi) Capacity Building for Conflict Resolution (Seventh Report), (vii) Citizen-Centric Administration—The Heart of Governance (Twelfth Report), (viii) Social Capital—A Shared Destiny (Ninth Report) and (ix) Organisational Structure of Government of India (Thirteenth Report), (x) Promoting e-Governance—The Smart Way Forward (Eleventh Report) and (xi) State and District Administration (Fifteenth Report). The decisions of GoM on these reports are at various stages of implementation. The Report on “Combating Terrorism (Eighth Report)” has been examined by the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is understood that necessary action has already been taken on this report.

Thus, all twelve Reports have been considered, so far. Remaining 3 Reports (five, ten, and fourteen) are also expected to be shortly considered by GoM. The Cabinet in its meeting held on 3.12.2009 had taken note of the progress of action taken in respect of 2nd report (Unlocking Human Capital: Entitlements and Governance—a Case Study) relating to NREGA and in its meeting held on 29.12.2009 has taken note of the progress of action taken in respect of the 1st report (Right to Information Mater Key to Good Governance) and 3rd report (Crisis Management: From Despair to Hope).

5.2.2 Pakistan

In Pakistan, like India, many commissions, committees and experts were asked from time to time to study the administrative system and suggest improvements. Of these, five reports (Egger, 1953; Gladieux, 1955; Cornelius, 1962, 1970; Power, 1969) deserve to be discussed here as all of them thoroughly surveyed the administrative system and recommended measures to overhaul the existing system. None of the reform bodies found rationale for retaining an administrative system which had lost its usefulness and utility, and only encouraged the perpetuation of inequity and injustice in the recruitment, training, promotion, and pay among different civil services (Khan, 2009:128). The recommendations of the five reform bodies ranged from abolition of all-Pakistan services and their replacement with a single unified civil service composed of sub-cadres of all class I officers; abolition of reservation of posts in favour of a particular cadre; abolition of the elite CSP; establishment of uniform pay structures throughout the civil service; enhanced role of specialists in the civil service; provision of lateral entry; giving comparable status to Heads of Departments and Secretaries of Ministries; raising the status of the Public Service Commission; and abolition of the Establishment Division (Kennedy, 1987:56-64).

None of the recommendations of the five bodies were accepted. In fact between 1953 and 1972 no major changes were effectuated in the civil service system. The resistance to major administrative reforms emanated from and sustained by the members of the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP). The CSP felt threatened by the recommendations and organised effectively to block their acceptance. The result, from the point of view of the CSPs, was remarkable. Both Egger and Gladieux reports were labelled secret and barred from public circulation for

over a decade. 'As an elitist group in Pakistan bureaucracy the CSP wield (ed) tremendous power and influence ... it was able to prevent the publication of two reports (Egger and Gladieux) which were adverse in their comments on its role and efficiency' (Sayeed, 1967:155-56). He (Egger) perhaps considered too lightly that his recommendations directly threatened officials with status and power (CSP) in the administrative structure (Gorvine, 1966: 189). The opposition to the Pay and Services Commission, 1959-62 also known as the First Cornelius Commission was open, organised and well orchestrated. The members of the CSP took a very active and leading role in waging a sustained campaign to block the efforts of the Commission. As an organised and privileged group within the civil service system, the CSP had everything to lose because 'such proposals deeply threatened the elite status and exclusiveness of the CSP, particularly the attack (of the Commission) on its privileged system of earmarked jobs' (Gorvine, 1966:202). Two members of the Commission belonging to the CSP disagreed with the majority opinion and submitted a dissenting note justifying the maintenance of the status quo. The CSP National Association expressed its solidarity in public with their two senior dissonant colleagues. One member of the CSP even took time to write to support the continuation of the pre-eminent position of the CSP (Husain, 1969a; 1969b). The same fate befell the Report of the Working Group on the Reorganisation of the Public Service Structure prepared in light of the Fulton Committee Report, 1969, popularly known as the Power Report and the Services Reorganisation Committee Report, 1970, also known as the Second Cornelius Committee Report. Besides the CSP opposition, there was almost no political support for reform. This is understandable. After the assassination of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1951, political instability became a permanent feature of the governance system. Between 1951 and 1958 the power was in the hands of one person, the Governor-General and the President. Prime ministers and other ministers were appointed and dismissed by him at will. Also during this period no election was held to constitute a new federal legislature. The rulers preferred to continue with a legislature which was constituted in 1946 during the British time. The military was all along strongly supportive of the chief executive, a former senior civil servant. But finally, as expected, the military formally took over the reign of power in 1958. The military rule continued for thirteen years. The general who staged the coup was against any major changes

in the civil service system of the country. General Ayub Khan who ruled Pakistan from 1958-1969 stated that the 'Cornelius Commission recommended radical changes involving a complete redesigning of the existing scheme and organisation of public service but nothing should be done at this time which might disrupt the administrative fabric' (Khan, 2009:106). Interestingly, it was General Ayub Khan who appointed the Commission. General Yahya Khan succeeded General Ayub Khan and continued with the same policy.

The implementation of far-reaching administrative reform proposals had to wait till the assumption of power by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party won majority seats in the National Legislature from West Pakistan (now Pakistan) in the 1970's parliamentary elections. Bhutto, after his appointment as Prime Minister, wasted little time to overhaul the administrative system of Pakistan. Bhutto's 1973 reforms were shaped, influenced and moulded by the recommendations of Egger, Gladieux, Cornelius, 1962 and 1970 and Power, 1969. Bhutto's administrative reforms could be termed 'revolutionary' and its salient features included:

- a. Abolition of service cadres and their functional replacement by occupational groups;
- b. The establishment of a Unified National Pay Scale replacing the numerous pay scales extant at the time of the reform;
- c. The discontinuance of the long-standing practice of reservation of certain posts in the Central Secretariat for members of the elite cadres;
- d. The establishment of a program of joint pre-service training; and
- e. The establishment of provisions for the introduction of lateral recruits, i.e., individuals without cadre affiliation to posts within the Central Secretariat. Provision for vertical movement between cadres was also introduced. (Kennedy, 1986:54).

Bhutto's success in implementing major administrative reforms can be explained by looking at a number of variables. First, Bhutto had the convictions and the political will to undertake radical reforms. Second, after the 1971 war, the Pakistan military lost its credibility and was compelled to hand over power to the civilian government of Bhutto. Third, the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) whose consistent and dogged resistance blocked earlier reforms were defensive for the first time because they were not able to manipulate Bhutto. Bhutto

was apprehensive of the military-CSP alliance which effectively ruled Pakistan since independence in 1947. Fourth, majority of the members of other civil services (excepting the CSP) wanted the dismantling of the existing system and its replacement by a reformed one. Fifth, public disenchantment with inefficiency, arrogance and corruption in the civil service reached such a stage that it could not be ignored any more. The major share of the blame went to the CSP as they were the ones who occupied key positions in the civil service and exercised authority. Civil servants, especially the CSP's, were not viewed immune from political influence. The perception was there that they needed to be reformed to be changed. With General Ziaul Huq's seizure of state power in 1977 through a coup, the stage began of reversing the process of administrative reform initiated by the Bhutto government. The civil bureaucracy spearheaded by the members of the former CSP cadre and its successor the District Management Group started to assert itself and re-emerged as a powerful group with a great deal of power and prestige (Islam, 1990:75). It is no surprise that a large number of senior policy and administrative positions are presently occupied by members of the former CSP cadre.

Pakistan's problems of governance do not require any unknown solution but they require political will to initiate bold reforms. Unnecessary leakages, high non-development expenditure, and a low tax base have strained the government's fiscal position to the point that without immediate reforms, it will remain caught in chronic stagflation, always spending beyond its means and adding to the unbearable deficit (Husain, 2011). Pakistan's colonial heritage has heavily influenced its political culture as well as its bureaucratic and political institutions (Wilder, 2009:20). The power imbalance between the very strong bureaucratic institutions that Pakistan inherited from colonial India and the very weak representative and democratic institutions has been one of the greatest causes of political instability in Pakistan since its independence (Wilder, 2009:28). Pakistan's civil bureaucracy has too often colluded with the military to retard the growth of democratic institutions and to gain or retain power even under elected civilian governments. At the same time, over centralisation, corruption and political interference in the civil service have undermined government capacity to deliver public services. Some 30 commissions have been constituted since independence to reform the civil service, but very few recommendations have been accepted or implemented (ICG, 2010).

Most recent effort to reform the civil bureaucracy in order to ensure good governance in Pakistan is the creation of National Commission for Government Reforms. This Commission was constituted in 2006 and finished its work in 2008 by producing a detailed report named *Reforming the Government in Pakistan*. Another significant attempt to reform the governance mechanism in Pakistan in post-2000 period, the government also tried to reform the local government system based on concept of devolution so that people can participate in decision making regularly. On the basis of the recommendations of National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB) the Local Government Ordinance 2001 was enacted. In 2002 Police Reform was also initiated through the introduction of Police Ordinance 2002. Before the commencement of NCGR those two ordinances abolished the posts of Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Assistant Commissioner and transferred the powers historically and traditionally enjoyed by these officers, to elected Nazims at the District, Tehsil and Union levels (NCGR, 2008:29). The executive magisterial powers, under which the Deputy Commissioner exercised checks and balances on the police officers, were also taken away and the administrative reporting relationship was also assigned to District Nazim (NCGR, 2008:29). On the basis of suggestions of the previous committees and commissions NCGR identified civil service reform needs (Wilder, 2009:26-27; NCGR, 2008:2-5). These are:

- Greater Accountability: The need to strengthen internal and external accountability mechanisms to address widespread corruption within the bureaucracy.
- Enhanced Efficiency and Transparency: The need to promote greater efficiency and transparency by replacing manual processes with automated ones and rationalising antiquated and outdated rules, procedures and regulations.
- Rightsizing: The need for greater efficiency and affordability through rightsizing (most feasibly through natural attrition) of the large number of government employees in the relatively unproductive subordinate services (grades one to sixteen).
- Reform of the Cadre System: The need to promote equality of opportunities and career advancement within the civil service rather than the tradition of giving preferential treatment in terms of training, positions and promotions to certain elite cadres (e.g., the Civil Service of Pakistan until 1973, followed later by the District Management Group).

- Clarifying Relationships and Responsibilities of Civil Servants at Federal, Provincial and District Levels: The 2001 Local Government Ordinance devolved considerable authority from provincial to district governments, and at the district level from civil servants (most notably the powerful district commissioners) to elected *nazims*. While there have been some positive benefits from devolution, it has generated tensions between provincial and district governments, and is perceived by many to have increased law and order problems by politicising the role of the police, who are accountable to locally elected politicians rather than district officers. It has also generated considerable confusion about the responsibilities and reporting relationships for civil servants operating at the district level.

In 2006, the National Commission on Government Reforms (NCGR) was set up to recommend reforms that would enable “the government, its institutions and infrastructure” to better “meet the social, economic and political challenges that Pakistan faces in the 21st century” (NCGR, 2008:5). Headed by Ishrat Hussain, a retired civil servant and former State Bank governor, the NCGR produced a report after two years of consultations with provincial and district governments, serving and retired civil servants, and civil society members. The Commission submitted the report in May 2008 to Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani, who pledged to consult provincial governments and other stakeholders on the report’s recommendations as well as to debate them in the National Assembly (ICG, 2009:10). The NCGR report recommends administrative restructuring, human resource management, and simplification of existing rules and procedures and improvements in service delivery.

Recommendations by NCGR

The following are the major recommendations of NCGR:

Restructuring the Civil Services

- There will be four types of services in Pakistan—All-Pakistan, Federal, Provincial and District. All-Pakistan Services will include:
 - i. National Executive Service (NES);
 - ii. Pakistan Administrative Service(PAS) (formerly DMG);
 - iii. Police Service of Pakistan (PSP).

Officers belonging to All-Pakistan services will rotate between the Federal and the Provincial Governments.

Re-organising the Structure of Government

- The Federal Government should transfer legislative, administrative and financial powers to the Provincial Governments in respect of Education (except curriculum and Higher Education), Health (except national health programs), Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Forests, Local Government, Rural Development, Labour, Social Welfare and Population Welfare;
- It proposed to create some new ministries and Divisions by merging, liquidating, transferring some of the existing ministries and Division; and
- All the existing 411 autonomous bodies, semi-autonomous bodies, corporations, companies, councils, commissions, training institutes, attached departments, subordinate officers etc. have been regrouped into two broad categories:
 - i. Autonomous bodies;
 - ii. Executive departments.

Improving Human Resource Management and Development

- The sources of recruitment for the Civil Services should be widened and diversified.
- Job descriptions and specifications should be developed for all the positions in the Federal and Provincial Governments.
- Particular attention should be given to bring the standards and rigor of recruitment of ex-cadre officers at par with cadre services.
- New training institutions should be established for training of technical and professional staff at the Federal and Provincial Governments in the subject areas of their respective expertise.
- Incentives, facilities and standards for specialised and professional training institutions should be comparable to those with the National School of Public Policy.
- As a starting point it is suggested that those who are selected to the NES through a rigorous competitive examination should be given MP III to MP I scales.

- It is recommended that the current system of Annual Confidential Report (ACR) should be replaced with an open Performance Evaluation Report (PER) system in which the goals and targets are agreed at the beginning of the year, key performance indicators to measure the achievements are settled and an open discussion is held between the appraise and the supervisor on the identification of development needs to carry out the work.
- The promotion policy and career management should be the responsibility of a centralised Human Resource Management and Development Agency.
- E-Government tools and development in digital technology offer promising prospects for improving the efficiency of government, reducing the costs of transactions, convenience the ordinary citizens, introducing transparency and reducing discretionary powers and therefore corruption and tracking the performance and output.

Implementation of NCGR's Recommendations

A high power parliamentary committee has been proposed to implement the recommendations made by the NCGR headed by Ishrat Husain. Chaudhry Abdul Ghafoor, a PPP parliamentarian, scrutinised the recommendations and produced a new report on the basis of earlier one. The Federal Minister/MNA, Chairman, National Commission for Government Reforms (NCGR) Chaudhry Abdul Ghafoor, chaired the 19th meeting of the Commission in the Prime Minister's Secretariat on February 9, 2010. The Commission decided to re-examine the recommendations of the previous Commission Report of 2008. It was decided that fresh recommendations would be placed before the Prime Minister before submitting the same in the Parliament for discussion (PID, 2010). No high powered committee has yet been set up to examine revised recommendations of the final report of NCGR. The demand for the implementation of NCGR's recommendation has now reached a new height during last two years as the people think that bureaucracy has failed to meet the good governance challenges (Sherani, 2012).

5.2.3 Sri Lanka

From 1948 to 1956 there was no attempt on the part of the government to reform the civil service in spite of demands by opposition political

parties for overhauling the inherited administrative system. A number of factors contributed to this lack of interest in major reforms (Warnapala, 1974:333). First, the process of 'Ceylonisation' was virtually completed before independence in 1948. This Ceylonisation simply meant that by that time the elite Ceylon Civil Service (CCS) was entirely manned by Ceylonese themselves. Second, there was similarity in the social background and cultural orientation of the members of CCS and the political leadership which came to power after independence in Sri Lanka. The elite civil servants and the political elite belonged to the landed gentry and were related in many cases by kinship. Third, there was conviction on the part of the political leadership that the CCS was capable of adjustment and adaptation.

The status quo within the civil service remained unchanged till 1960. After the elections of 1960 the new government declared its intention to reorganise the civil service. Keeping this objective in mind, the government appointed the Salaries and Cadre Commission popularly known as the Wilmot Perera Commission. The major recommendations of the Commission were the abolition of the elite Ceylon Civil Service (CCS) and constitution of a Unified Administrative Service. The Commission in its report submitted in 1961 spelled out the nature of the unified service. The members of the service would be chosen on the basis of a uniform method of recruitment providing equal opportunities to all civil servants for entry into the higher echelons of the civil service, the need for unification in the civil service was recognised as early as 1953 by the Poulier Commission.

Though the government accepted the recommendations of the Wilmot Perera Commission, it did not implement the body's recommendations in full. As a result of the partial implementation of the recommendations, the Ceylon Administrative Service (CAS) was formed in place of Sri Lanka Administrative Service (SLAS). All the administrative officers above the executive level, belonging to CAS and other departmental cadres were absorbed into the CAS. The manner in which various categories of civil servants were absorbed in the CAS seemed to be discriminatory. Under the rule of absorption ... officers belonging to the (erstwhile) CAS were absorbed into Classes IV to I, but the bulk of the officers from the Administrative Grades and Services were absorbed into one of the two grades in Class V, the lowest class. Only a few (non-CAS officers) were absorbed into higher classes. This resulted in anomalous situation such as District Land Officers

with twenty years' service being placed below CAS cadets with one year's service' (Navaratne, 1980:70).

The reform efforts have not succeeded in bringing about major changes within the Sri Lankan public service system. The members of the SLAS, remnant of the colonial CCS, continue to enjoy both prestige and status far disproportionate to their actual size. There is little doubt that members of SLAS have significant influence on the outcome of any major reform effort within the public service system. Although no major reforms have been effectuated in the civil service system, increasing politicisation of the bureaucracy has continued unabated. Personal loyalty to the minister and party in power has now become the most important virtue of a civil servant in place of dedication and devotion to the state (Wijeweera, 1989: 292). There has not been political will to build a civil service based on meritocracy and security of service. Also the elite civil servants have not been eager to give up power which they have enjoyed for so many years.

After the failure of the first three phases of administrative reforms, Sri-Lanka began to lose donor support. The previous attempts of reforming the civil service were truly supported by ADB, UNDP and other international donor agencies. Unfortunately instable politics and bureaucratic corruption brought the dissatisfaction into the donors and ultimately they withdrew their supports (McCourt, 2006). Subsequently in 2001, the government took a new turn and implemented an amendment to the Constitution restoring the independence of the Public Service Commission which had earlier been manipulated by politicians. It created parallel Police and Judicial Service Commissions, with the leader of the opposition having a real say in the appointment of their members, who is to serve three-year terms separate from the electoral cycle. The three main parties and civil servants through their staff associations all supported the reform: "The Public Service Commission means we have justice" was one senior bureaucrats view. In one service cadre, political interference had gone down "from 90-100 per cent to 5-10 per cent," according to a very senior officer in that service (McCourt, 2006; Shah, 2007:35). The establishment of separate commissions on public service, judicial and police recruitment was a very significant effort to ensure corruption free bureaucracy along with the practice of meritocratic recruitment. Political interference in the process of making professional bureaucrats has gone down drastically which ultimately helped the Sri Lankan government to

bag many complements from citizens as the bureaucrats started to work freely and efficiently.

5.2.4 Nepal

Attempts at modernising and reforming Nepalese administrative system started with the end of Rana Administration in 1951. During the Rana Rule the administration was intended to serve the Prime Minister who always came from the Rana family. The civil servants collected land revenues and customs duties and maintained law and order. They were poorly paid and had no tenure. Beginning from 1952 to 1976 a number of foreign experts and four commissions examined various facets pertaining to the Nepalese civil service and made a number of major recommendations. The reform efforts ranged from formulation of appropriate rules and regulations, preparation of manuals, the setting up of an O & M office and establishment of a training program in public administration (Panday, 1989: 323).

Of all the reform initiatives the formation of the Administrative Reform Planning Commissions (ARPC) in 1956 was the landmark development in the history of public administration reform in Nepal for a number of reasons. First, the ARPC was the first indigenous Commissions with a broad scope of work to survey and analyse all aspects of the civil service system in Nepal. Second, the Commission was headed by the then Nepalese Prime Minister Tanka Prasad Acharya who commanded public respect for his integrity. Third, ARPC's modus operandi was not writing and submitting reports for later consideration, but discussion, decisions and implementation right through (Panday, 1989:324). The significant products of the ARPC which were effectuated included: organising the civil service into eight cadres; organisation of an O&M office; activating the Public Service Commission; establishment of the Institute of Public Administration and the setting up of Nepal Rastrya (State) Bank (Poudyal, 1984:92).

But the major reform measures of ARPC initiated and implemented under the guidance of the then Prime Minister could not run its full course. Acharya was dismissed by King Mahendra after in office for only eighteen months. This was clearly a setback for the continuation of the process of administrative reform. Other efforts to reform the civil service have not fared well. In 1959, Prime Minister B. P. Koirala attempted to implement measures that would have brought dynamism in the civil service. His measures included revoking of obstructing

acts, rules, regulations, and structures; activating the Public Service Commission; increasing salaries of civil servants; prohibiting civil servants from seeking support from the Royal Palace for their protection and promotion; and fixing expenditures of Royal Palace (Poudyal, 1989:121-125). Koirala suffered the same fate as that of Acharya.

The resistance to major administrative reforms in Nepal has been explained rather cogently (Panday, 1989:323-35). First, Nepal's governing coalition has not been in favour of a strong career civil service which the reforms intended as the latter might challenge the former in course of time for share of state power. Second, administrative reforms were intended to seek external legitimacy for the regime and donor support. Consequently, there has been more enthusiasm in creating new administrative structures in such a manner as to produce desired results, i.e., better public service. The recommendations of the Jha Commission, 1965 and the Thapa Commission, 1975 for the reduction of number of ministries were not implemented even after the government's acceptance of the recommendations. Instead, the number of ministries increased in both instances. The Public Service Commission is routinely ignored in matters pertaining to public personnel management. Nepal has gone through two popular uprisings within a short span of sixteen years. The first popular movement of 1990 overthrew the King-led undemocratic Panchayat System and reinstated parliamentary democracy. The second movement of 2006 caused the end of the kingship, the unitary system of government and the parliamentary constitution of 1990 (Tiwari, 2009:1). With dramatic political and demographic change on the horizon, the increasing expectations of the people for quality service from the civil servants, the demand for "cleanliness" and transparency in the administration, interconnectedness of people, issues and ideas between Nepalese and others, the continuous development of technology and media, are well known trends; they provide a pointed context for deepening civil service reform (Shakya, 2009:43). Nepal cited the first major attempt of reforming the civil service during the start of the new millennium as the Institutional Support for Governance Reform (ISGR) program launched jointly by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Nepalese government. This Report took the Janet Tae Report as the basis and further built on it. The Report in its first volume submitted as many as 12 broad recommendations which include the creation of a governance centre, functional analysis of right sizing, more formal management method, implementation arrangements, formulation of

overall framework or "Master Plan", new job description, service delivery indicators, training and development and ethics component of the reform (MOGA, 2007). The latest effort in the series was Governance Reform Program (GRP) which was implemented by the government in June 2001 and the project was terminated in July 2007. The program was an offshoot of the ISGR. A part of this report was implemented in six areas under the project Road Map of Governance Reform since December 2002. The six areas include: improvement in information management, improvement of the proficiency and expertise of the civil service, reform in governance system and elimination of corruption, rightsizing the civil service, reducing corruption, development of indicators and procedural reform to improve work performance of some major ministries, and leadership development and augmentation of the institutional capacity for implementation (MOGA, 2007). A part of this report was implemented in six areas under the project Road Map of Governance Reform. The six areas included: improvement in information management, improvement of the proficiency and expertise of the civil service, reform in governance system and elimination of corruption, rightsizing the civil service, reducing corruption, development of indicators and procedural reform to improve work performance of some major ministries, and leadership development and augmentation of the institutional capacity for implementation. With the exception of creating a Change Management Committee in the Ministries under the Chairmanship of the Secretary, no other activities were implemented (Shakya, 2009:44).

5.3 CONCLUSION

Several conclusions emerge from the foregoing analysis of the experiences of initiating and implementing major administrative reform proposals in South Asian civil services. First, lack of political will and commitment on the part of political leadership has been the key determinant in the failure of major administrative reform efforts. Successive political leaderships in all these countries except for the Bhutto government in Pakistan from 1972-77 found it expedient to publicly profess the need for radical overhaul the public service systems. Their public commitment was limited to setting up of reform bodies and appointment of other bodies mostly composed of senior civil servants to scrutinise the recommendations of various reform commissions and committees.

Second, the civil servants belonging to elite cadres like the IAS in India, the CSP in Pakistan and the CSS in Sri Lanka have been the vanguard of resistance to any attempts to change the status quo. They have usually been successful because of the political leadership's undue dependence on them. Third, there has not been any organised reform movement by any major segment of the society in the South Asian countries to offset bureaucratic resistance and political apathy towards major administrative reforms.

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CHAPTER 6

Coping with the Challenges of 21st Century: Experiences of Commonwealth Countries and Prescriptions for Bangladesh

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Major administrative reform initiatives have not been successful so far in Bangladesh. The public service the way it is designed and operates is not suitable to meet the demands of the citizens. It is clear that in view of the changed social, political and economic scenario there is an urgency to radically reform the public service. Tinkering and minor adjustments will not be enough. The challenges of the twenty-first century which lie ahead must be faced boldly with a reformed, revitalised and dynamic public service. The democratic system which is in operation for last twenty-two years is slowly being institutionalised in the context of intolerance, bickering and violence. The system of non-partisan caretaker government, for the interim period to hold parliamentary elections, has recently been scrapped by the ruling grand alliance led by Awami League. In the economic arena there is continuing emphasis to encourage increasing participation of the private sector in the national life. The social scene provides a picture of deterioration of moral values buttressed by the desire to move up in the social ladder using whatever means are available at one's disposal. The brief description above of the changed socio-political and economic scene makes one

thing crystal clear. The public service must change and corresponding changes must also result in work ethics and attitudes of public servants. Otherwise, Bangladesh will not be able to survive let alone prosper in the highly competitive world market. This concluding chapter includes discussion as to how other Commonwealth countries have reformed their public services to face the challenges of the twenty-first century; and recommendations as to how the public service in Bangladesh can also be revamped, revitalised and reformed in order to confidently tackle the ever-changing and complex world of today and tomorrow. In making the recommendations the experiences of other Commonwealth countries along with the fundamental deficiencies afflicting the public service in Bangladesh have been kept in mind. It is understood also that significant differences exist between Bangladesh and some Commonwealth countries in terms of social, political, economic and cultural variables. It is also believed that in spite of the differences, experiences of other Commonwealth countries can be useful for policy makers and policy planners in initiating and implementing major administrative reforms.

6.2 EXPERIENCES OF COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES

Many commonwealth countries, irrespective of population size, resource-base and geographical location, have had to face the difficult task of initiating, managing and implementing reforms in the public sector. The reform movement now is a worldwide phenomenon (Ayeni, 2001). These countries have adopted similar strategies by redefining the relationship between policy-making and administration; introducing greater accountability, task-definition, performance measurement and delegation of the control of resources; the need for closer collaboration with organisational review; and the importance of the quality of service (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:v). Problems confronting the public service could not be solved without looking at them from a radically different perspective. It is not enough to find solutions banking on such variables as political will, relevant ideas and managerial initiatives. Increasingly in recent years the focus has been on the role of the state. Many consider that without agreement on a changed role of the state nothing much can be achieved. The domain of the state must be considerably reduced. Consequently, serious thinking needs to be given to refocusing and narrowing the role and responsibilities of

governmental institutions. What is visualised is a new role and style of government buttressed by a new managerial approach. The experiences of Commonwealth countries indicate that for sustaining public service reform programs a number of factors and/or variables should be present. These are considered as components of a framework within which changes take place.

Political Commitment

High-level political support given by politicians in power and senior civil servants is a decisive factor in successful implementation of reforms in the public service. In UK, Canada, New Zealand, Jamaica, Malaysia and Singapore successful reforms received support and encouragement from heads of governments as well as chief executives of organisations suggest that sustainable commitment has three elements at both political and managerial levels. These levels are:

First, commitment to change involves a willingness to indicate a clear preference for the future; to say what an improved public service would look like and what it is in the past that must be left behind. Second, it also entails a willingness to take responsibility for, to own and to accept praise and blame, for the process that will lead to that future. Finally, commitment requires a preparedness to describe and repeat, as often as possible both that preference for the future and the process for getting there (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:15).

The above detailing of levels clearly operationalises political commitment vis-à-vis major administrative reforms. Vision for future on the part of political and managerial leaders is the crucial ingredient in political commitment.

A Credible Pace for Reform

Successful reform programs, irrespective of their nature and coverage, must have credibility. This credibility should not be confined to any particular group. The experiences of New Zealand and Mauritius indicate that though there were differences among the two in terms of the pace of reform both worked within given constraints and promised what they could realistically offer (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:15-16). Credibility of a reform program to all—politicians, people and civil servants—determines to a large extent its eventual success.

A Focal Point for Change

Experiences of two African countries, i.e. Uganda and Zambia confirm the hypothesis that implementation of comprehensive reform programs depend on a strategically placed central unit competent to monitor progress and if required to guide progress (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:16).

Ownership Across the Public Sector

The management of change in the public service makes it almost imperative that public servant at different levels in the hierarchy to be involved in the process and share the vision and want change (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:7). The importance of ownership of major reforms by all in the public service is clearly noticed in countries like New Zealand and Trinidad and Tobago.

Balancing Consumer Expectations

Public service improvements in many Commonwealth countries have resulted due to high level of expectations of citizens as consumers of services and goods. But to match citizen demands managerial expectations also must increase. The experiences of Singapore, Namibia and the UK are pertinent in this context. Singapore civil service has encouraged raising of public expectations of service standards while performance evaluation and accountability mechanisms are being strengthened in Namibian civil service so that each and every citizen knows what kind of services can be expected (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:17-18). In the UK the citizen's charter initiative is an attempt to create awareness among citizens as to the standards to be expected from public services (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:18).

Feeling the Consequences of Services

Some Commonwealth countries have been successful in institutionalising systems of feedback in the public services to ensure that improvements or deterioration are detected and so that appropriate actions can be taken. Performance management systems are utilised to link achievements against organisational goals as well as budget allocations are being increased to high-performing organisations at the expense of those whose performance have not been satisfactory (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:18). In Zambia performance targets are now very much pan of

the public service while in the UK school funding is conditioned by the popularity of the schools with parents.

Building Institutional Support Outside

Effective public service depends on interconnected network of civil society organisations and interest groups, whose specific concerns are harnessed to support public service performance as many managerial options proposed for inclusion within public service reform programs rest on the capacity of external civil, professional and political institutions (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:18-19). In Ghana, a nation-wide program, the National Institutional Renewal Program is prepared in such a way so that the public sector institutions are strengthened and public service improvement becomes a constituent of the larger program.

Open-Ended Continuous Change

It is now accepted that reforms are part of the public service as pace of change is to increase in future to cope with challenges. The reforms instituted in Malta noted that there were specific aspects of the service that must be improved urgently and at the same time they recognised that there was a long-term, open-ended process of reform ahead (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:19). Beside the above-mentioned eight components of a framework for change, seven practical strategies have been identified within reform program undertaken in Commonwealth countries. These are: improving policy development and coordination, restructuring the organisation, reorienting the organisational culture, managing human resources, commercialising and developing partnerships, improving financial planning and control systems and harnessing information technology (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995:20).

6.3 PRESCRIPTIONS FOR CHANGE IN BANGLADESH

The public service in Bangladesh is in the throes of crisis. It is characterised by a rigid structure, low productivity, overarching reach, lack of delegation of authority, recruitment not totally based on merit, inappropriate training and not need-based, promotion not linked with performance, irrational transfer, constant inter-cadre feud and pay not linked to performance and productivity. The result of the crisis is evident in poor quality of service, lack of service orientation among civil servants, endemic corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, inefficiency,

ineffectiveness and rising cost for maintaining the public sector. The World Bank in a recent report points out succinctly what ails the public sector in Bangladesh. Some of reasons for such a pathetic condition are:

A state apparatus that extends well beyond the core functions of the state. Unpredictable and sometimes covert decision making and weak accountability make government actions non-transparent, and also creates a complex, oversized and nearly unmanageable bureaucracy. Badly motivated and underpaid public employees are at the senior and mid-management levels (The World Bank, 1996a: 57).

The discussion which follows concentrates on what should be done to reform the public service and how this can be accomplished. The discussion proceeds in light of the experiences of the Commonwealth countries, global trends in the area of public service reform as well as limitations of the government of Bangladesh.

Rightsizing the Government

It is now apparent that government involvement and intervention in each and every aspect of a citizen's life is neither possible nor feasible. But this has been the case in Bangladesh. The numbers of ministries, departments and civil servants, have doubled since independence. The reason behind such an increase has been threefold (The World Bank, 1996a:17). To meet emerging needs and concerns in such areas as environment and women, new governmental institutions were set up. Increasing involvement of the state in commercial activities also demanded new organisations in the public sector. Also ministries and divisions were created to accommodate political elements and faction leaders and consequently more avenues opened in the process for politicians to give jobs to their key supporters. Therefore it is no wonder that the number of ministries in Bangladesh stands at 35 which is considerably large compared to other countries such as Malaysia (24), South Korea (25), Thailand (14), Japan (14) and UK (16) (The World Bank, 1996a:17). Not only ministries but there have been corresponding increase in the number of personnel in the public sector organisations in Bangladesh. The public sector employs a million people in 35 ministries, 50 divisions, 221 departments, 139 directorates and autonomous bodies and 153 state enterprises (The World Bank, 1996b:57). In view of the present situation, a number of actions need to be taken to right size the government. The premises on which actions

are recommended include: (i) government is not in the business of providing employment to its citizens on a regular and continuous basis without taking into consideration the need and costs involved; and (ii) public service jobs are not meant to be used to dole out political favours.

First, all posts that have been remaining vacant in the public sector for a considerable period of time should be abolished. Second, redundancies in the government should be tackled by significantly reducing the number of ministries, divisions, departments, directorates and subordinate offices in accordance with the actual needs. Third, administrative heads of all government agencies should be instructed by a designated agency, a unit within the Prime Minister's Secretariat, to review functions, work load and performance of their organisations twice a year and send specific proposals to the latter to reduce a percentage of their sanctioned posts and manpower. Fourth, voluntary retirement of civil servants, especially those at the lower rung of the hierarchy, should be encouraged. At the same time, the practice to reappoint senior civil servants on contract basis after they reach compulsory retirement age should be discontinued. Fifth, contracting out of selected functions and services of public sector agencies to private sector organisations should begin immediately.

Open Structure

The way public service structure is organised in Bangladesh encourages inter-service tensions between cadres, between cadres and non-cadres and non-cadres and between class 1 officers and class II, III, IV officers and staff (UNDP, 1993:63). The measure recommended here is the adoption of the open structure for the public service in Bangladesh. To introduce open structure, two actions should be taken simultaneously. First, different classes and cadres within the public service should be abolished. Second, a single classless Unified Grading Structure (UGS) should be introduced. The proposed UGS would contain grades with appropriate number of pay scales matching different levels of skills and responsibility. Correct grading for each post should be determined by job analysis. The UGS can be operationalised by improved job descriptions to clarify both agencies expectations of public servants and the linkages between tasks, standards, skills and minimum qualifications.

Enhancing Accountability

A major problem in Bangladesh's public sector is not only lack of accountability but also the nature of accountability itself as the chain of accountability stretching from the parliament to class IV employees is weak and fuzzy; many of the links have been severed, resulting in the inability to enforce financial contracts, stop theft in public enterprises or hold officials accountable for improper or delayed judgement (The World Bank, 1996a:viii). Traditional internal mechanisms like hierarchy and supervision have mostly failed. A number of actions should be taken to institutionalise political control over civil service and to substantially improve performance within governmental agencies. First, parliamentary accountability lies at the heart of good governance especially in a democratic system of government. A number of steps need to be taken to strengthen parliamentary accountability. One of the first measures in this direction would be the establishment of a bipartisan parliamentary task force to strengthen the standing committees, instituting the practice of questioning ministers and providing members of parliament with adequate office and research facilities and establishing an office of ombudsman (The World Bank, 1996a:viii). Also a parliamentary secretariat should be established outside the sphere of the civil service and be manned by competent personnel recruited separately and controlled by the speaker of the parliament. Second, to ensure financial accountability the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) must be reorganised and strengthened by enhancing the capacity of the CAG, allowing CAG direct contacting of auditing firms, initiating programs to undertake comprehensive audits and separating the audit from accounting function (The World Bank 1996a:ix). Third, the standards of performance of the ministries/divisions and their affiliated agencies should be made known to the citizens (Rahman et al., 1993:52). Fourth, complaint procedures should be in place in government agencies for wider use of citizens. A register should be maintained containing information about the timing and nature of complaint. Fifth, monitoring procedures need to be tightened so that the concerned senior civil servant knows the extent of compliance by subordinates to relevant orders and directives as well as services provided to the citizens. Fifth, units are established in each ministry and division to develop and apply performance criteria and measures and to develop internal performance audit capability (UNDP, 1993:106).

Ensuring Transparency

Public sector decision making is non-transparent. Bureaucrats value secrecy and not willing to inform public how decisions are taken. Openness and transparency are alien concepts in the public bureaucracy in Bangladesh. A number of actions are recommended to ensure transparency and thereby considerably empower citizens (The World Bank, 1996a:xii). First, the Official Secrets Act of 1923 and Government Service Conduct Rules of 1979 need to be suitably modified. Second, a task force on public sector transparency should be established with membership from different professional and occupational groups to suggest measures to enhance transparency. Third, necessary steps need to be taken to make all contract evaluations reports public thereby enabling all bidders to see how evaluations were made. Still other steps can be taken to ensure transparency. Fourth, earning and tax payments of elected as well as appointed officials can be published on a yearly basis. Fifth, interested citizens must be allowed access to relevant files and documents. Such inspection of files and documents will enable affected citizens to understand the process and dynamics of decisions taken within the context of existing rules and regulations. This can help citizens to accept decisions of public servants that have gone against them, i.e. fixation of rate of municipal and income taxes. Sixth, number of files marked secret and top secret should be drastically reduced to encourage more frequent inspection of more files by citizens and facilitate free-flow of information. Seventh, civil servants long accustomed to transact public business under the veil of secrecy, should be appropriately trained and indoctrinated to bring about necessary changes in their attitudes and work habits.

Eradicating Corruption

It is well known fact that corruption thrives in Bangladesh especially in the public service. Corruption in the public sector in Bangladesh is attributed to monopoly, weak accountability mechanisms and poor pay (The World Bank, 1996a:xii). A number of measures have been suggested to eradicate corruption from the public service in Bangladesh (The World Bank, 1996a:xii and Rahman et al., 1993:97). First, a high-powered task force be established consisting of public officials, parliamentarians and leading public citizens to review all relevant issues pertaining to corruption and to suggest a comprehensive eradication program. Second,

an autonomous standing committee be formed with judges, senior officials and leading citizens to oversee the activities of the Anti-Corruption Commission as well as authorise investigation of senior officials in ministries, corporations and other agencies by a statutory appointed and protected public prosecutor. Third, full use need to be made of AC's own investigators as prosecutors when necessary. Also other measures can be taken to combat corruption. Fourth, salary and benefits of public servants must be at par with their counterparts in the private sector. Paying a decent salary will significantly reduce the tendency to indulge in corruption. Fifth, there should be provision for severe punishment if public servants are found to be involved in corruption including long stay in jails and confiscation of property. This measure, if effectively applied, will considerably deter public servants involvement in corrupt activities. Sixth, accountability mechanisms and measures along with increasing transparency in public dealing as suggested earlier will facilitate the ushering in of an honest and clean public service.

Delegation of Authority

Centralised control and top-down direction have contributed to stifling of initiatives at different levels in the hierarchy, close supervision, slow decision making and blind adherence to rules and regulations. To facilitate delegation of authority in the public service in Bangladesh a number of actions should be taken. First, increasing delegation of administrative and financial powers to different successive layers within ministries and divisions as well as to departments, directorates, subordinate offices, corporations, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies be given. Second, to ensure delegation of authority to subordinate units in the government, appropriate changes need to be made in documents like the Rules of Business and the Secretariat Instructions which contain rules and regulations that govern relationships between political rulers and public servants as well as among public servants serving at different levels in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Third, delegation of authority is invariably linked with such variables as intra and inter-ministerial coordination, multiplicity of decision making layers, channels and processes of communication and allocated time for disposal of business. So timely and meaningful changes in these variables need to be brought about to facilitate increasing delegation of administrative and financial authority down the hierarchy and

units, multiplicity of layers, among others, creates redundancies and slows down decision making. Fourth, actions should be initiated to decentralise in a progressive manner policy decisions pertaining to personnel to ministries, divisions, departments, directorates, corporations, autonomous and semi-autonomous bodies.

Merit-Based Selection

The recruitment and selection (R&S) process in the public service in Bangladesh is characterised by a lack of clear cut and well-defined recruitment policy; provision of reservation of posts; lack of objectivity and archaic form and contents of tests and relegation of the status of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) vis-à-vis the Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA). All these have created anomalies, contradictions, confusions and deficiencies in the R&S process. Merit-based selection in the public service can be ensured if the following actions are taken. First, each and every selection should be based on merit. Merit in this context means that entrance into the public service at different levels should be based on performance in open competitive examinations and/or demonstrated professional qualifications, expertise and experience. Second, measures should be taken to progressively limit the scope of quota (reservation) system with the objective of its eventual withdrawal¹ within a specified time period. Third, in view of the gradual deterioration in the quality of the civil servants and educational system of the country, introduction of a two-tier recruitment system premised on accelerated upward mobility for bright, talented and outstanding civil servants is a must. Specially designed tests would be devised and administered by the BPSC to those public servants who had completed five years of services to spot the 'high flyers'. The successful ones, after completion of appropriate training at the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), would be given challenging assignments for a period of two to three years. After the completion of that period the performance of these civil servants would be evaluated by a team consisting of BPSC members and secretaries of relevant ministries. Only those civil servants whose assessments had been highly satisfactory would be placed on a 'fast track' with the provision of review of their performance every five years to determine their career progression. Fourth, in view of the yawning gap between task performance and quality of personnel especially at the mid- and top levels, lateral entry of professionally-qualified individuals from

relevant disciplines need to be institutionalised. Their qualifications, experience and expertise would be assessed by a high-powered team consisting of the chairman, BPSC, top functionaries of recognised professional bodies and secretaries of relevant ministries. Fifth, the capability of the BPSC in terms of personnel, equipment and activities need to be considerably enhanced. Politicisation in terms of appointing ruling party's supporters to the posts of chairman and members of the BPSC must be stopped. Sixth, clear delimitation of the role of the BPSC vis-à-vis the MOE is urgently needed to enable the former autonomy in terms of policy decisions and day-to-day functioning. Seventh, a comprehensive R&S policy needs to be formulated taking into consideration the present reality and the future challenges confronting the public service. The cornerstone of such a policy should be merit.

Need-Based Training

Public sector training has been characterised by a lack of clear, bold and innovative training policy; poor quality of training and dearth of well-trained and professional corps of trainers; training curriculum mostly based on foreign models and rarely updated; teaching methods mostly classroom-based and lack relevant practical exposure; proliferation of training institutions; training not linked to career development; absence of appropriate evaluation of training programs; and tendency to appoint career civil servants to directorial posts in premier training institutions. The need of the hour is to impart such training to public servants in Bangladesh that is useful and relevant. Hence the emphasis is on need-based training. For that to happen a number of policy decisions need to be adopted. First, a national training policy (NTP), with input from professionals and public servants of all types, need to be formulated to meet the challenges that lie ahead. The proposed training policy should contain specific guidelines, among other things, as how to link training with career planning. Second, the National Training Council's (NTC) role should be specified and its membership should include civil servants as well as specialists from such disciplines as management and public administration. The NTC is to act as an apex body where deliberations should include how to operationalise and implement the guidelines to be contained in the proposed NTP keeping in view government's policy preferences and review of achievements and problems in the area of public sector training. Third, training should be clearly linked

to a public servant's career planning and progression. Training should become a necessary tool for a public servant to do his job more efficiently. There must be an appropriate fit between the task at hand as well as future assignments and types of training one receives or will receive at a later date. Fourth, professional trainers should have adequate opportunity for career movement, entitled to attractive pay and other allowances and scope for further professional development to attract and retain qualified trainers. Fifth, there should be regular evaluation of various training programs to assess their utility in terms of enhanced capacity and increased efficiency of trainees in their jobs. Sixth, mechanisms need to be devised to facilitate more contact and cooperation of the public sector training institutions with those in the private sector. This will enable both parties to draw upon each other's experience as well as sharing of resources and personnel for mutual benefit.

Promotion Linked to Performance

There is widespread dissatisfaction among civil servants regarding the promotion system. Promotion is usually not perceived as a reward for a job well done. The distrust mainly centres on how the evaluation is made when a case for promotion is considered. Linking promotion with performance of civil servants is needed. For that to happen a number of actions must be taken. First, there should be a clear and unambiguous understanding at the highest political level that merit should be the sole criterion for promotion of civil servants. Second, mechanisms must be designed and in place to correctly evaluate performance. The present mechanisms like Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) and interviews have been found to be deficient in objectively assessing the performance of civil servants. Third, qualified professionals be involved in designing appropriate evaluation mechanisms to be used in future promotion exercises. Fourth, there needs to be a sea change in the attitudes of civil servants towards promotion. They should realise that promotion is earned through one's hard work, diligence and productivity and not merely as a result of incumbency. The discussions above concentrated on what specific measures should be taken to bring about reforms in the public service in Bangladesh. But at the same time it is to be understood and appreciated that the most difficult stage in any reform process is the implementation stage. The discussions that follow will emphasise on the presence of some key variables and institutional mechanisms as preconditions for successful

implementation and institutionalisation of major administrative reform measures. It is believed that the presence of such critical variables and mechanisms will create a conducive environment for ushering in and sustenance of major reforms in the public service in Bangladesh.

Political Will

The main driving force behind successful implementation of major administrative reform measures has been and continues to be political will on the part of politicians in power. This significant variable has been conspicuous by its absence in Bangladesh vis-à-vis major reform implementation. The experience in Bangladesh clearly suggests that politicians have not been serious in overhauling the inherited bureaucratic system. They talked about reform but did almost nothing about it. Political commitment is the prerequisite if significant and meaningful administrative reform measures are to be implemented. It is now time for the Awami League government to demonstrate through its actions and deeds that it is hundred per cent in favour of a reformed public service which is in tune with changed international and domestic demands and priorities. Political guidance and direction are needed to chart a course of action which would be different from those in the past. The political leaders must be able and willing to present a vision for the future of the country and to show where and how the public service would fit into it. So courage, conviction, bold and innovative actions are needed to make a clear break with past failures and make a new beginning. But a new beginning is not always possible without costs and risks. Political leadership must be willing to take risks and own both failures and successes and not try to shift the blame on the faceless public servants. Policies and priorities of the government should be focused towards the future and not wasting time to minutely dissecting the failures of the past. The role of the Prime Minister would be to unite and lead the nation to bring about the much needed reforms indicated earlier. Here her leadership qualities will face severe test. She can find solace from the fact that other heads of governments in the Commonwealth countries had to go through the same process and many came out successful. Public service reform should be at the top of her policy agenda. She must demonstrate her government's commitment to major administrative reforms by undertaking radical and innovative measures to bring about thorough yet meaningful changes in the public service in Bangladesh.

Bureaucratic Reorientation

It is well established that resistance from within resulted in the non-implementation of major administrative reform measures suggested by various government-appointed commissions and committees and donors. Bureaucratic culture in Bangladesh was developed and shaped by colonial heritage of British and Pakistani rule. Maintenance of the status quo and resistance to change has become the hallmarks of bureaucratic culture. Unless there is significant change in the beliefs, values and attitudes of the members of the public service there is little prospect that meaningful changes would result. Indoctrination must begin at the top ladder of the public service because from this level leadership is provided to obstruct, misdirect and nullify reform proposals that seek to do away with the vested interest. Public servants must be convinced that it is in their interest to accept and welcome change. Otherwise, the very foundation on which the public service stands will face severe scrutiny and eventually will be forced to live with a public service that is bound to be much smaller in size and significantly short on credibility. Public servants must own reforms and accept changes.

Civil Society

It is now certain that a government alone may not be able to bring about radical changes in an institutional bureaucracy. Other forces in the society must be organised to lend their support for a reformed public service. So, effective involvement of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private development organisations (PVDOS), professional associations, interest groups and political parties are needed as effective components of the civil society in Bangladesh to bring about changes in the age-old bureaucratic system. This will give a significant boost to changes needed in the public service. But for this to happen the civil society in Bangladesh should accord top priority to a reformed bureaucracy in its agenda and start a time-bound movement to realise its goal. It needs to be mentioned that it would not be difficult especially for NGOs, given their track record in the field of poverty eradication, to mount and sustain systematic and meaningful campaign for a reformed public service that would be accountable, transparent and service-oriented.

Role of Donors

All international donors have been critical of the role of public service in Bangladesh. The displeasure of the donor community about the efficiency and performance of public servants is an open secret. A number of donors sponsored studies of the public service system. All the studies pointed out deficiencies of the public service system or parts of it and recommended measures for overcoming such ills. But the governments of Ershad and Khaleda Zia did nothing more than constituting committees manned by top civil servants to review donor sponsored study reports. Nothing came out of such exercises excepting giving much needed time to both the governments to stall donor pressure for reform. Past experiences indicate that international donors must take a number of interrelated actions. First, the donors should meet and decide on a joint strategy as how to effectively persuade as well as to pressurise the government to move towards major changes and reforms in the public service. Second, implementation of major administrative reforms should be tied to aid in non-developmental projects. Third, international donors should be involved in one capacity or another in the implementation of reforms suggested by bodies funded by them. International donors also could play a catalytic role in promoting reform in the public service by:

- providing institution building support;
- establishing in their own programs accountability measures and performance standards which should be widely disseminated;
- ensuring user participation, undertaking customer surveys, and in eluding responsive measures in their programs and in implementation agencies supported by them, enhancing flow of information of their operation, particularly implementation performance, to the civil society;
- incorporating "lessons of success" in their programs and critically scrutinising and questioning prevalent way of doing business before finalising program/project design;
- proactively identifying and encouraging agents of change, supporting local think tanks and policy research in ministries to internalise this debate and keep it alive; and
- supporting local media in its role as watchdog and as a forum for debate on imperatives for and modalities of reform (The World Bank 1996a:xxii).

In other words, important and proactive role for international donors in reform implementation is recommended in view of the dependence of Bangladesh on external assistance. The leverage that international donors have over the Bangladesh government need to be used judiciously but at the same time, firmly with the intention to usher in far-reaching changes in the public service..

Reform Implementation Body

Most major reforms fail at the implementation level. Bangladesh provides a case to substantiate the thesis that high attrition rate of major reforms at the implementation stage is a reality. The major reason is the way the implementation committees are constituted. These committees are manned exclusively by senior civil servants. Most of these civil servants by virtue of their orientation and work habits are reactive, conservative and pro-establishment. They are afraid of change and prone to resist any move which would disrupt the status quo. It is no wonder that most of the reform measures had a premature death during deliberations in these committees. Reform measures were attacked as impractical, costly and useless. Reforms had no support in the bureaucratic hierarchy. To overcome the problems of reform implementation, a high-powered permanent reform implementation body to be known as Reform Implementation Commission (RIC) should be set up immediately. The RIC is to be headed by the Prime Minister and is to be located in her secretariat. The Establishment Minister is to act as her deputy. In the absence of the Prime Minister he would preside over the meetings of RIC and oversee its day-to-day activities. He would be accountable to the Prime Minister. The Commission's membership would include relevant professionals from outside the government and generalist, technical and functional civil servants. A balance had to be maintained between professionals and public servants so that the latter cannot dominate the former using their numerical numbers and positions in the bureaucratic hierarchy. The main functions of RIC would be to spearhead change, to design reforms, to put them to work and to monitor their implementation (The World Bank, 1996b:59). The Commission would be also expected to provide the analytical underpinnings for reform, adopt a total quality management approach, formulate specific proposals and strategies and raise awareness of the need for change (The World Bank, 1996b:59). An overarching role for RIC is visualised. Its scope of operation would be wide. It would

be run like a professional organisation with knowledgeable, committed and proactive individuals. All personnel would have to perform their responsibilities with a missionary zeal. In other words, it would not be allowed to degenerate into a typical bureaucrat dominated body constituted to resist change and pass time. Rather it would become the lead focal institution for change.

6.4 CONCLUSION

It is not easy to cope with change. Change brings about pressure to do things in different ways and a break away from established practices and habits. Learning new behaviour and adopting new attitudes are required. These are not easy propositions. These are a few of the many reasons as to why changes are resisted and not implemented. Experiences of the Commonwealth countries have demonstrated that significant changes can be brought about and sustained in the public service provided there is political commitment to do so. Other variables that are also important include credibility of the reform program, designating a focal point for change exercise, ownership of reforms by public servants, enhancing consumer expectation, instituting systems of feedback, building support for change outside and acceptance of change as a continuous activity. A number of recommendations have been made to reform the public service in Bangladesh. Many of the recommendations are different from the measures implemented in the Commonwealth countries because the ills that afflict the public bureaucracy are so deep rooted and fundamental that to overcome these one has to propose wide-ranging change measures of far-reaching consequences. But there are also commonalities. Political will must be the driving force behind a reformed public service in Bangladesh. A sea change must occur in the orientation and work ethics of public servants. The public service must be accountable for its actions and transparent in its activities. Size of the public sector must be significantly reduced to enable more competition and improvement in the delivery of services. The structure of the public service must be rationalised. Widespread corruption among public servants must be checked by instituting strict anti-corruption measures and enhancing pay and emoluments of public servants based on their performance. Training and indoctrination systems need to be reorganised to equip the public servants with necessary knowledge and skills as well as to contribute changes in their beliefs, values and attitudes to enable them to appropriately

perform their tasks. Merit-based selection lies at the heart of a competent public service and this has to be ensured. The critical role of the civil society in reform implementation needs to be understood and accorded necessary importance. International donors can and should play a significant role in this regard. At the same time institutionalising a reform implementation body with wide-ranging powers and responsibilities is absolutely vital for successful implementation of major administrative reforms on a continuous basis.

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